Heart

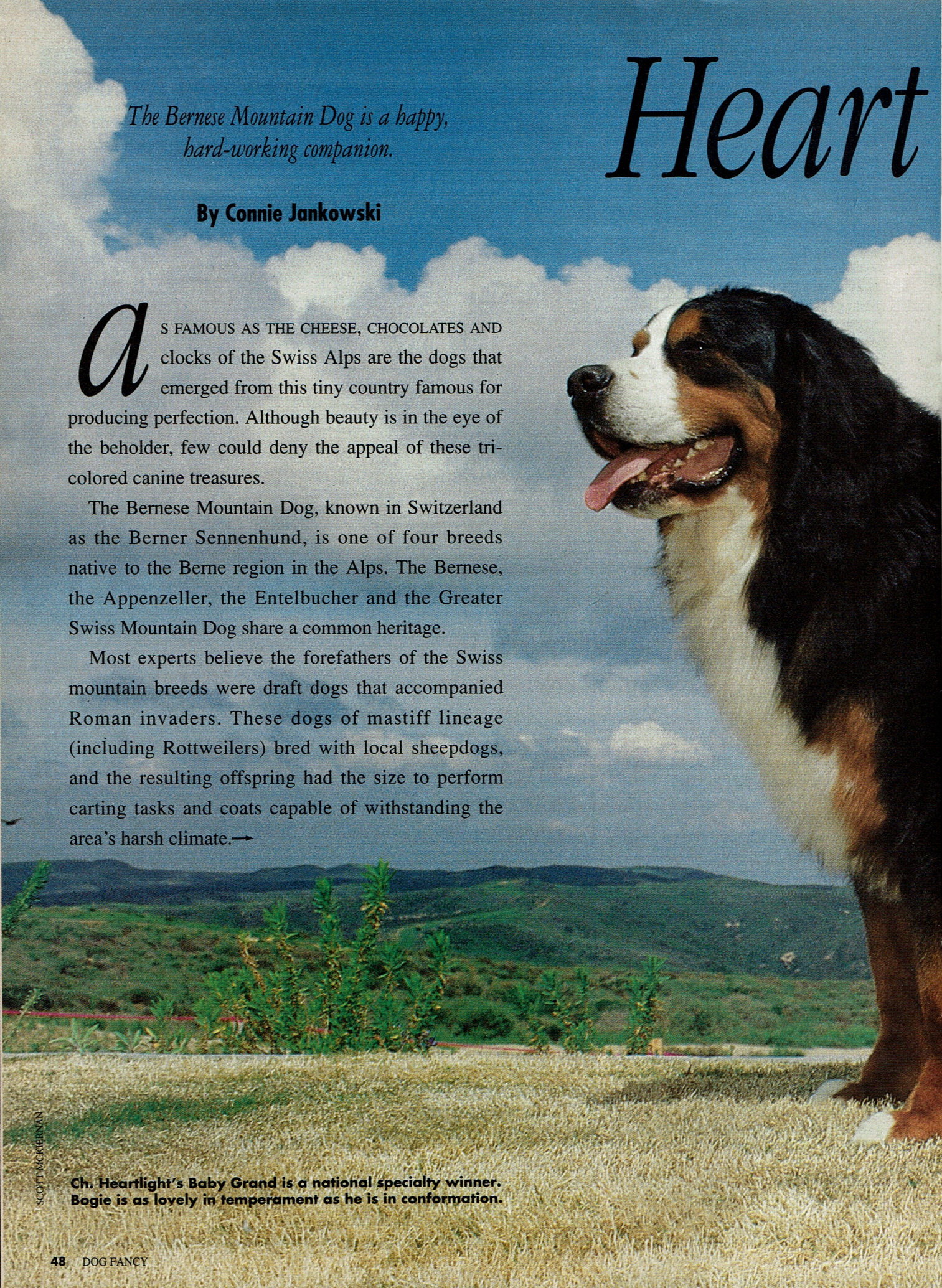
The Bernese Mountain Dog is a happy, hard-working companion.

By Connie Jankowski

AS FAMOUS AS THE CHEESE, CHOCOLATES AND clocks of the Swiss Alps are the dogs that emerged from this tiny country famous for producing perfection. Although beauty is in the eye of the beholder, few could deny the appeal of these tri-colored canine treasures.

The Bernese Mountain Dog, known in Switzerland as the Berner Sennenhund, is one of four breeds native to the Berne region in the Alps. The Bernese, the Appenzeller, the Entelbucher and the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog share a common heritage.

Most experts believe the forefathers of the Swiss mountain breeds were draft dogs that accompanied Roman invaders. These dogs of mastiff lineage (including Rottweilers) bred with local sheepdogs, and the resulting offspring had the size to perform carting tasks and coats capable of withstanding the area's harsh climate.→



SCOTT MCKIERNAN

Ch. Heartlight's Baby Grand is a national specialty winner. Bogie is as lovely in temperament as he is in conformation.

Of Gold

BREED PROFILE

DOGFANCY®
Photo by Faith A. Uridel
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BREED
PROFILE

ISABELLE FRANCAIS

Another theory says that the Bernese developed from large dogs that belonged to farmers in northern Switzerland and southern Germany. Archaeological findings suggest that large dogs inhabited the area as early as the Bronze and Iron Ages.

USEFUL COMPANIONS

These big-boned, heavy chested dogs became useful to the local farmers. Used as draft and cattle dogs, they rounded up herds and helped carry produce to the marketplace. Their territorial natures enabled these dogs to serve as watchdogs in the farmyards, while their social attitudes enabled them to be children's companions and guardians.

The Bernese Mountain Dog was almost forgotten, however, until the late nineteenth century when Swiss fancier Franz Schertenleib took an interest in the breed. He searched the countryside for breeding stock, but the remaining dogs were barely recognizable. However, a handful of typical Berners were located, and today's dogs can be traced to those few.

The first Bernese (a dog and a bitch) were imported into the United States in 1926 by a Kansas farmer, Isaac Schiess. The pair was bred, but Schiess was unable to register the offspring because the breed was not recognized by the American Kennel Club until 1937.

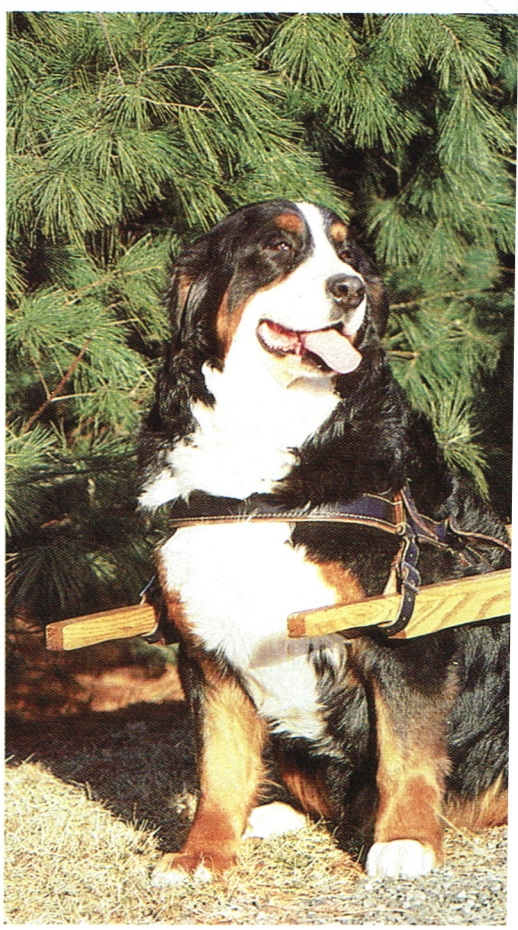
American interest in the breed grew, largely because of articles that appeared in magazines such as *National Geographic*. However, the second World War made it impossible for enthusiasts to import stock from Europe. Post-war importation efforts established the breed in this country, and the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America was formed in 1968.

The first national specialty was held by the BMDCA in March 1976, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. An impressive entry of 71 dogs competed.

STANDARD

Size and sturdiness are the first characteristics that strike the viewer of a Bernese Mountain Dog. The dog stands square on straight, well-boned, well-balanced legs. The casual observer will certainly next notice the alert expression of these dogs.

The structure of the Berner—the deep, broad chest and smooth topline—reflects the strength and power of a dog once used to drive heavily laden carts to market. A show or breeding quality Berner should display strong reach and



ISABELLE FRANCAIS

This type of strenuous activity requires sound hips and a sound temperament.

On overleaf—Friichnicht Barkley Sparker (Barkley) is a Canine Good Citizen and a therapy dog, and he participates in carting and agility. Barkley is owned by Russell and Ruth Ann VanNoort of Dyer, Indiana, and handled by Ruth.

The Appenzeller is the shortest of the Swiss Mountain Dogs. This breed excels in herding.

drive and smooth movement.

Males should be larger than females, and bitches should be feminine in appearance. Dogs should stand 25 to 27 1/2 inches at the shoulders, bitches 23 to 26 inches. Average weight for a Berner is 80 to 100 pounds.

A proper Bernese Mountain Dog sports a jet black body coat with a distinguishing white blaze on its face and muzzle. White feet, a white tail tip and a bright white chest add further flash. Rich mahogany or tan markings above the eyes, on the cheeks, and between the black and white on the legs complete the tricolor pattern that is shared among all four Swiss mountain dog breeds.

Dark-brown oval eyes and ears that hang close to the head give the Bernese the heartwarming expression for which it is famous. The skull is broad, and a well-defined stop should accentuate a strong muzzle. A scissors bite (with no missing teeth), deep black pigmentation of nose, eye rims and lips, and closed flews complement the handsome head of a good Bernese.

Last but not least, a bushy tail with a white tip should be properly carried by a Berner. When moving, the tail should be carried low—not over the back. A good Berner is relaxed when moving, and the low tail carriage indicates a dog that is relaxed and comfortable when moving.

TEMPERAMENT

A typical Berner is a happy worker, a loving companion and eager to please its owner. Only dogs of sound mind and body should be bred, and reputable breeders screen their dogs for temperament. If you plan to acquire a puppy, ask the breeder about the temperaments of his or her dogs. Can friendly strangers approach the adult dogs? Have any of the dogs earned obedience titles or worked with children? Beware of shy or aggressive pups. Your dog's temperament is vital to its success in becoming the companion you desire.

Start training and socializing your puppy as soon as possible. Be sure the dog is current in its vaccinations, and, if possible, enroll in a puppy kindergarten class with your dog. Make sure the class uses positive reinforcement and consistency as the basis of training. Harsh physical training (hitting, jerking, pushing) can damage a dog's temperament.

The Bernese seeks human companionship because it has worked in conjunction with people for many centuries. Therefore, Berners should be treated as companions and family members. If raised with children, most Bernese flourish in the atmosphere (parents must teach children the boundaries of their relationship with any pets).

Time spent with your dog will help it become a good companion. A dog that is ignored and not exercised will not develop its social graces. Enroll in a dog-training class, teach your dog to cart, let him accompany you to Little League games.

GROOMING

To keep your Bernese looking its best, you must groom it regularly. There is nothing more appealing than a beautiful Bernese with shining, wavy tresses and a sparkle in its eye. There is nothing more disappointing than a matted dog with a dry coat and a defeated expression. Keeping your dog in the first category requires only a minimal amount of time—as long as you keep to a schedule.

Luckily, the Bernese coat requires no

Mexican Ch. Rigi V. Bothswain, C.D., T. T., and his daughter Aberdeen Von Riggenbach are superior examples of the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog. Their favorite pastime is pulling carts loaded with children.

SCOTT MCKIERNAN

tricky trimming or stripping. The long locks do need thorough brushing, however. Plan one 30-minute session each week. During the session, use a slicker brush to thoroughly brush the coat. Remove dead hair, tangles and dirt. Be sure to brush the whole way to the skin, parting the hair in layers as you work your way from head to tail.

If you start when your dog is young, you can train it to lie on its side while you perform grooming tasks. Place your pup on its side and put one hand on its head and one on its hip until it relaxes. When the pup relaxes, talk soothingly as you begin softly brushing. Your puppy will learn to enjoy these sessions—and you may too!

After the dog has been detangled, use a steel-toothed comb to fine-tune your work. A pin brush should complete the brushing of the body coat; brush against the lie of the coat, toward the head, to produce that fluffy look. A small-toothed comb can be used on the short hair of the face.

The Bernese holds its coat for six months to a year. Then it will go through a massive "blow," in which most of the undercoat is shed within approximately two weeks. Males and spayed bitches typically shed once a year; intact bitches shed twice a year, in conjunction with their heat cycles.

Never bathe a matted dog. Before wetting your Bernese, thoroughly remove mats and dead hair. Otherwise, clumps will form when you wet the dog.

Choose a pH-balanced shampoo made for dogs. Shampoos formulated for people are too harsh for the Bernese coat. If necessary, choose a canine coat conditioner for your dog. Occasionally, a dog's coat may be damaged by weather, diet or stress. However, if the condition persists, consult your veterinarian.

Trim the hair around your dog's paw pads to prevent slipping and matting of the hair. Be sure the pads are clean and healthy. Trim the dog's toenails so that the nails do not form hooks. This is especially important for dogs that spend a great amount of time indoors on carpeting. Long nails are more than unsightly—they inhibit the position of the foot when the dog is standing, injure the joints and affect movement.

HEALTH

The health and well-being of your dog should be your primary concern. Purchasing a puppy from a reputable breeder is critical in starting a long, healthy life together. Unfortunately, dogs are at risk for developing diseases, just as people are. Therefore, the breeder must research the diseases common in his or her breed, and should be willing to discuss the threat of disease with you.

The following conditions are known to have appeared in the breed: hip dysplasia, osteochondritis dissecans, fragmented coronoid process (elbow dysplasia), umbilical hernias (common, but pose no serious problems), entropion/ectropion (inward or outward rolling eyelids), cancers (the BMDCA is funding studies of cancers that affect the Bernese), hypothyroidism, autoimmune disease and whelping problems (often requiring caesarean sections).

Your dog's breeder and your veterinarian can recommend a good diet and an exercise program to keep your dog fit. Gail Vogel, a Bernese enthusiast, recommends a high-quality dry dog food containing no more than 26 percent protein and 15 percent fat as the base of the diet. Supplements of vitamins and other foods are occasionally recommended. However, calcium supplementation is dangerous and should be administered only under the supervision of a veterinarian. Keep your Berner fit—not fat!

RIGHT FOR YOU?

If the Bernese appeals to you, consider the life-long investment of time and money before you make the decision to acquire a puppy. Room to run and a fenced yard are requirements for owning any large dog.

Consider your lifestyle. Do you have time for an attention-demanding pet? Can you afford to feed and care for a large dog? Have you priced veterinary, boarding and grooming fees for such a pet?

For help in deciding whether a Bernese is the right companion for you and your family, see the reference guides in the boxed story above.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America, **Public Relations/Education, Ruth Reynolds, 5265 E. Fort Rd., Greenwood, FL 32443.**

The Alpenhorn **(official magazine of the BMDCA), Jack Lytle, 1338 W. Park St., Arlington Heights, Il 60005; $15/per year subscription.**

The Complete Bernese Mountain Dog, **Jude Simonds, Howell Book House, Macmillan Publishing Company, 866 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022.**

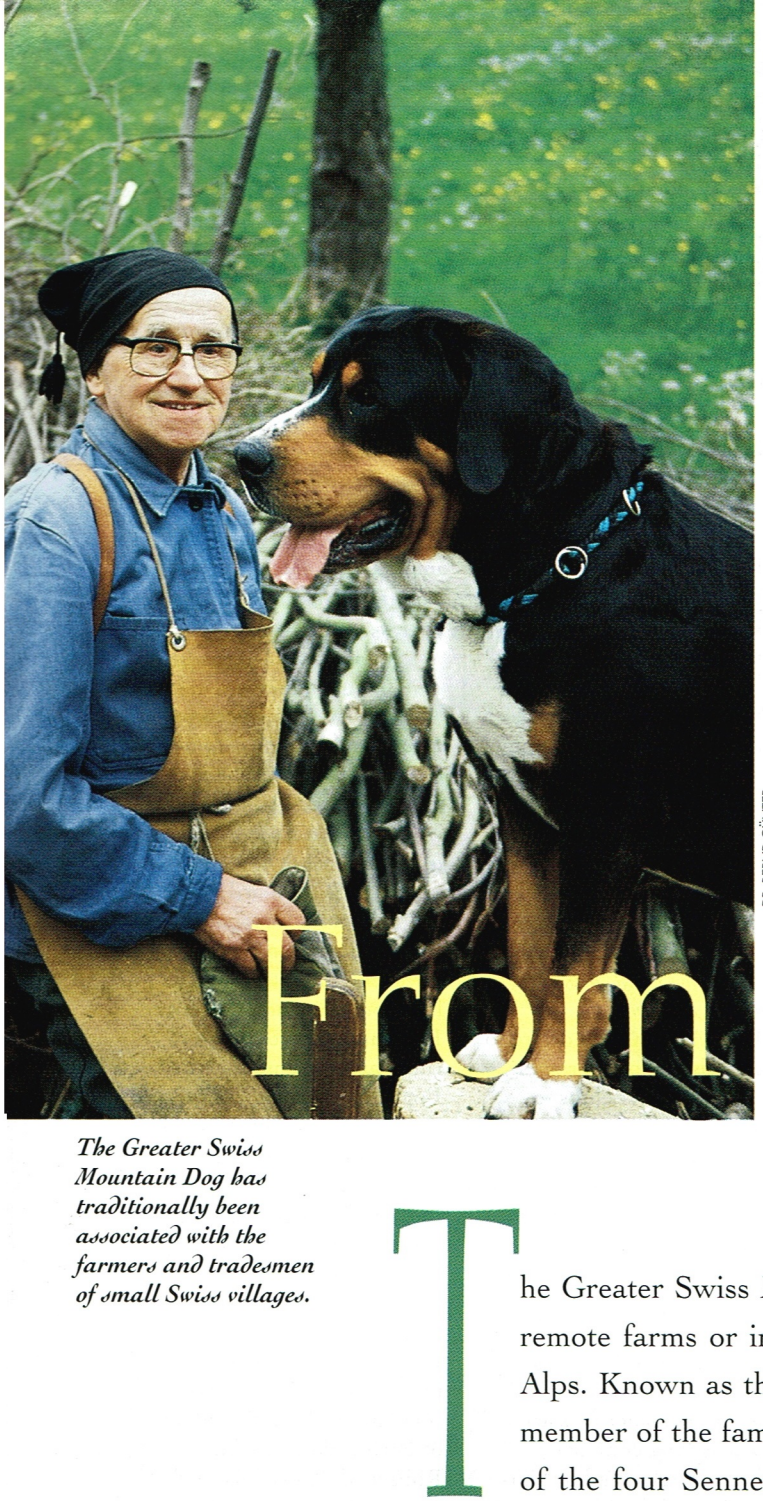
SWISS MOUNTAIN DOGS

The Bernese Mountain Dog is currently the only Swiss mountain breed to have full AKC recognition. The Greater Swiss Mountain Dog is among the breeds in AKC's Miscellaneous class. Both the Berner and the Swissy are relatively uncommon, but entries are seen at dog shows. The Appenzeller and Entelbucher are registrable in Europe but are very rare in this country.

The Appenzeller (also known as the Appenzell Mountain Dog or Appenzeller Sennenhund) is thought to have developed from the molossus breeds brought to Switzerland by Roman soldiers. Those mastiff-type dogs probably bred with local herding dogs, giving the Appenzeller its surefootedness and stable temperament. This breed is active—more so than the other Swiss mountain dogs—and makes a wonderful watchdog. The versatile Appenzeller successfully competes in obedience, schutzhund and herding-dog competitions.

The Entelbucher (also known as Entelbuch Mountain Dog or Entellebuch Sennenhund) is the shortest of the Swiss mountain dogs and is distinguished by its bobbed tail. The Entelbucher is a naturally protective dog, territorial but not overly aggressive. The dog can work independently and maintains great self-confidence.

The Greater Swiss Mountain Dog (also known as the Grosser Schweizer Sennenhund) is the oldest of the Swiss mountain dog breeds and is thought to have contributed to the development of the St. Bernard. The Swissy is attractive, easily groomed and responds well to obedience training. The breed was introduced to the United States in 1968 and was admitted to the American Kennel Club Miscellaneous Class in 1985.



DR. BERND GÜNTER

Judging the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog, one of the AKC's newest breeds.

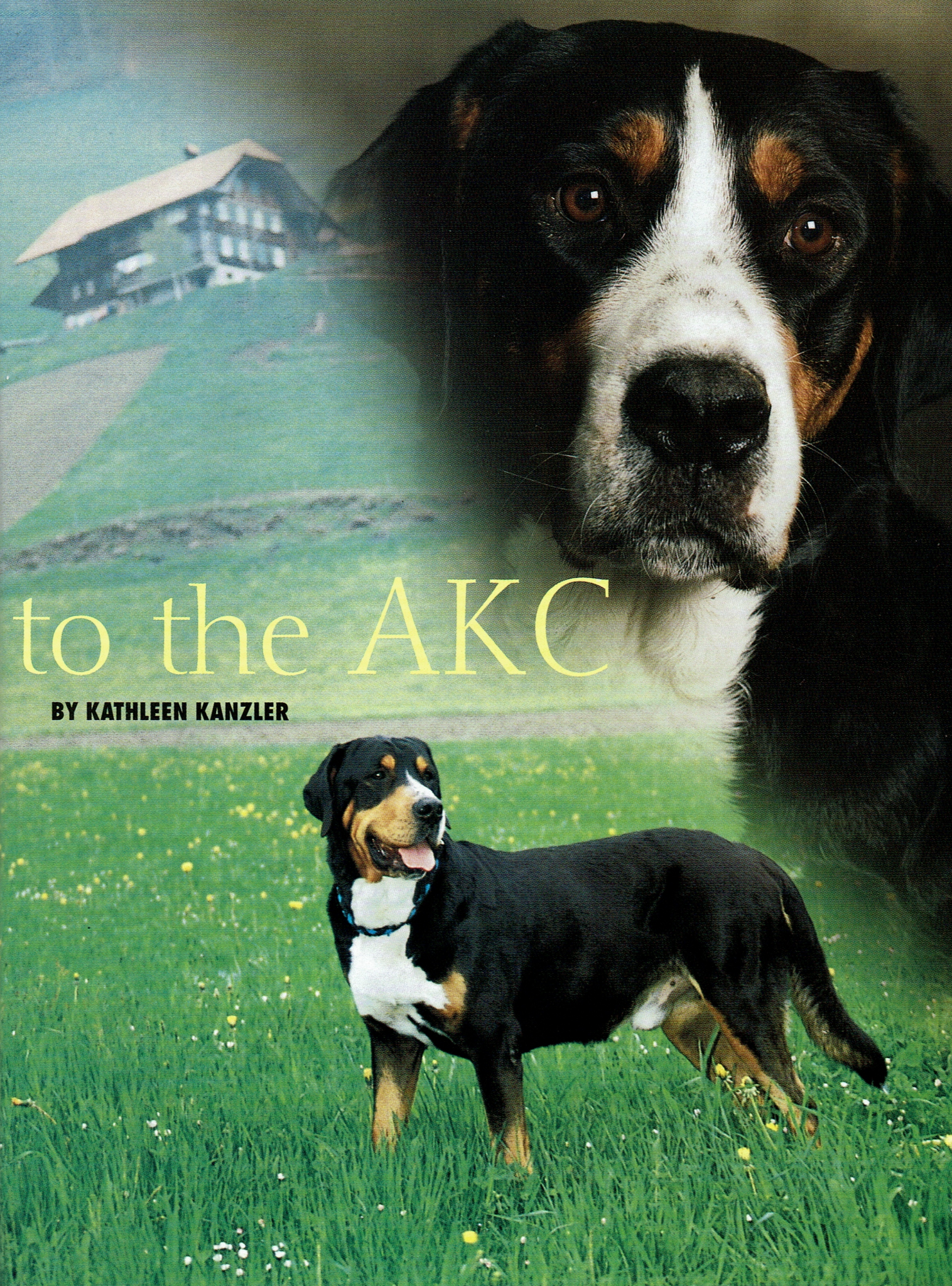
From the Alps

The Greater Swiss Mountain Dog has traditionally been associated with the farmers and tradesmen of small Swiss villages.

The Greater Swiss Mountain Dog is a dog from another era, living on remote farms or in small villages nestled in the foothills of the Swiss Alps. Known as the Swissy, it has long been a loyal and hardworking member of the family. It is the largest, and considered to be the oldest, of the four Sennenhund breeds. These include the Appenzell Cattle Dog, the Entlebuch Cattle Dog and the other AKC-recognized Sennenhund, the Bernese Mountain Dog.

The Greater Swiss Mountain Dog (GSMD) is calm, obedient, alert and protective. Its Mastiff background (see page 43) is apparent in its appearance — a large, short-coated, powerful dog, its body is full and strong. It is especially suited to the duties of a draft dog, and this natural ability to work in harness made it invaluable to the tradesmen and farmers it served; at one time, the Swissy was known as the poor man's horse. Because it is renowned as a draft dog, utility as a draft animal should be uppermost in your mind when judging this breed.

DR. BERND GÜNTER. HEADSHOT BY MELTON PHOTOGRAPHY



to the AKC

BY KATHLEEN KANZLER

DEBBIE FESKO

J. Frederick and Patricia Hoffman were the original importers of the breed. In 1970 the first litter of GSMDs was whelped in the United States, sired by Kastor von Fryberg out of Diana von Urtenenberg. Shown here are pups of a more recent vintage.

Color and Markings

The most uniform and outstanding cosmetic characteristic of the breed is its color and markings. The body is always jet black with black points. The markings are rich rust and white. Rust appears over each eye, on each cheek and on each side of the chest, on all four legs and under the tail. There is a white blaze on the muzzle and a white marking on the chest that typically forms an inverted cross. The tip of the tail is white, and white is present on the feet with rust between the white and black on each leg. White patches or a white collar are permitted around the neck.

Symmetry of markings is desired, though the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog's standard is not as rigid on symmetry as the Bernese Mountain Dog standard. Any ground color other than black is a disqualification. Blue eye color is also a disqualification.

The Swissy has a double coat consisting of a thick, midlength outer coat and a dense undercoat. The undercoat may sometimes show.

Head and Expression

As with most breeds, the head shape and expression express unique characteristics of the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog. It is important to understand head type for the Swissy; it is not a Rottweiler head. The Swissy has a large head and an animated, gentle expression. The eyes are of medium size

The GSMD is still a relatively rare breed even in its country of origin — 28 litters were registered last year with the Swiss Kennel Club. In the U.S., 442 dogs and 127 litters were registered from 1989 to 1993. This group portrait was taken after an American Rare Breed Association show.

BOOTH PHOTOGRAPHY

The Butcher's Dog

COURTESY THE SWISS KENNEL CLUB

A GSMD on civilian draft duty. This photograph appears in "Der Grosse Schweizer Sennenhund" by Margrit Scheitlin, DVM, published around 1945.

A native of Switzerland, the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog traces its lineage to the Mastiff-type dogs of the Roman Legions. The Swissy's more recent ancestors were from a type once common throughout central Europe often known as butchers' dogs. They were developed over hundreds of years by tradesmen, peddlers and farmers in isolated areas to be both servant and friend.

While the Swissy was supposedly the most widely kept dog in the mountain areas of Switzerland during the 1860s, by the end of the century it was thought by some to have virtually disappeared, replaced by foreign breeds that were imported. But Hans Raeber, in his book "Die Schweizer Hunderassen," doubted this is possible. "I ask myself what farmer of the Berne area — Emmenthal, Schwartzenberg or Oberland — would get a foreign dog, especially if it cost money!"

Raeber believes there was no systematic breeding there, or elsewhere for that matter. Farmers rarely traveled to take a bitch to a stud, so if only because the puppies stayed in the neighborhood, the dogs tended to exhibit a fair amount of stability in appearance and character. The dog's looks and build were measured against the farmer's ideal standard of beauty, the cow. If a dog proved unsuitable, it was butchered and eaten without misgivings, a rather strict selection process.

Raeber says the Swissy is clearly related to the St. Bernard and the Rottweiler of the time. (Because of the St. Bernard influence, the red-white coat on butchers' dogs was more prevalent than the tri-color of today, especially since the black color is not dominant genetically.) Breed identification was based more on function than on appearance. "Depending on what their owners wanted, the dogs were interpreted as either this or that breed."

In 1908, at the jubilee show marking the 25th year of the Swiss Kennel Club (SKC), two dogs referred to as short-haired Bernese Mountain Dogs were shown by a well-known breeder of the Bernese Mountain Dog, Franz Schertenleib. The judge that day happened to be Dr. Albert Heim of Zurich, a famous dog expert. He saw at once the possibility of a new breed of Sennenhunde. As Raeber relates in his book, "He said to Schertenleib, 'The dog belongs in a category of its own; he is too superb and spirited to push him aside as a poor example of a Berner.' "

Heim named the dog *Grosser Schweizer Sennenhund* on the spot. He called upon Sennenhunde fanciers to rescue this vanishing alpine breed. Reaction was swift, and the next year the Swissy was recognized by the SKC. Raeber believes those few moments in the ring constituted one of the great moments in Swiss cynology — had there been a different judge, there might not be a GSMD today. It is still a small breed even in its native land — in 1994 only 28 litters were registered.

The Greater Swiss Mountain Dog was introduced in the United States when J. Frederick and Patricia Hoffman saw the breed at a show in Frankfurt, Germany, in 1967. The following year the Hoffmans, along with Perrin G. Rademacher, imported the first Swissy into this country. The first two entries in the U.S. Stud Book were Kastor von Fryberg and Diana von Urtenenberg. They were the sire and dam of the first litter whelped here in 1970.

In the early 1970s Dr. Howard and Gretel Summons, owners of Sennenhof Kennels, became devotees of the breed. Their efforts helped establish the GSMD in America.

The Greater Swiss Mountain Dog Club of America was formed in 1968 in order to obtain wider recognition for the breed. There are currently 309 members from 40 states. The registry was approved on March 17, 1993, with 1,000 dogs. The Greater Swiss Mountain Dog became eligible to compete in the Working Group on July 1, 1995.

Brigitte Rhinehart also contributed to this history of the GSMD. A native of Switzerland and a Swissy breeder, she currently runs Brush Creek Kennels with her husband Frank in Phillipsburg, Mo.

DR. BERND GÜNTER

The GSMD is prized for its calm, even temperament, which is reflected in its growing popularity as a family dog.

and dark brown in color. Neither deep-set nor prominent, they have close-fitting eyelids. Eye rims are black.

The ears are midsize and triangular, gently rounded at the tip. They are set high and hang close to the head when in repose. When alert, the ears are brought forward and raised at the base. The top of the ear is level with the top of the skull. The skull is flat and broad with a slight stop. Skull and muzzle are of equal length. The muzzle is blunt, not pointed, and is strong and straight. The nose is always black. The lips are clean, and, as a dry-mouthed breed, flews are only slightly developed. The teeth meet in a scissors bite.

A Strong Body

While the essence of the dog — loyalty and calmness — appears in its eyes, the Swissy's drafting abilities are apparent in its body type. The neck is moderate in length, strong, muscular and clean. The topline is level, the body is full with well-sprung ribs and a slight tuck-up. The Swissy is large, with dogs standing 25.5 to 28.5 inches and bitches 23.5 to 27 inches at the withers. Body length to height is a 10 to nine ratio. Weight ranges from 110 to 145 pounds for dogs, 85 to 105 pounds for bitches. The Swissy is more agile than some of the other large breeds of its type. However, this is not a breed to fly around the ring — it is gaited at a moderate speed.

The tail reaches to the hocks, and is carried down in repose and raised when excited. The bones of the tail should be straight.

The shoulders are long, sloping and strong. They are flat and well-muscled. The forelegs are straight and strong, with very slightly sloping pasterns. The feet are round and compact, with well-arched toes. Front dewclaws are optional; rear declaws must be removed. The thighs are broad, strong and muscular. The stifles are moderately bent with well let-down hocks.

The judging of the Swissy should focus on its draft dog capabilities. It must be a full-bodied dog. Its broad chest and muscular thighs must combine with sturdy, well let-down hocks. This dog must have a strong, level topline to do its job as a draft dog.

A spindly or light-boned dog that is tall without substance of body and bone is not desirable. A dog high at the

The Greater Swiss is renowned as a draft dog, and the working aspect should be a primary factor when judging this breed's body type in the ring.

COURTESY THE SWISS KENNEL CLUB

This is Bello von Schlossgut, the dog Franz Schertenleib presented to Dr. Albert Heim at the Frankfurt show in 1908. He stood 67 centimeters (26.4") at the withers, with good colors and symmetrical markings.

the withers, cow-hocked or with an excess of skin does not portray the sturdy draft dog of the Alps that pulled the carts for the butcher in town and the farmer in the country. An effort to maintain height can sometimes go astray — specimens may appear lighter in the head, slight and long of body with a weak topline and a straight rear.

Ideally, the Swissy should move soundly, front and rear, with moderate reach in the front and a strong, moderately angulated rear that drives without showing weakness in the hocks. It should show strength of movement at a consistent, moderate speed, with its head just above the level of its topline. The judge is responsible for ensuring that cart dog type prevails.

Temperament

The Swissy displays the temperament of a willing worker and faithful companion, always alert and vigilant. Nervousness or aggressiveness should be severely penalized.

Swissies train quickly and are content to be family members, involving themselves in many aspects of your life. Outdoors, they tend to be at your side or watching as children play. Though generally friendly, Swissies have a sense of territory and will not take kindly to a stranger's invasion of property or home. Normally a quiet dog, they do have a deep, loud bark that, combined with their size and self-assurance, keeps home and family well protected.

The Greater Swiss Mountain Dog is a wonderful addition to the Working Group. In addition to their prowess as drovers and drafters, some Swissies excel at weight-pulling contests. Others have been employed as search and rescue dogs — they have a good nose and are good trackers. Their dignity and strength of character, combined with their dramatic appearance, will win them many new friends in their latest adventure, as one of the AKC's newest breeds.

Kathleen Kanzler is listed in Marquis Who's Who in the East *for her accomplishments in dogs. She is a Herding Group judge, and judges some Working Group breeds as well. She owns Innisfree Kennels, and writes the Siberian Husky breed column for the* AKC GAZETTE.

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CHAMPION MONA VON BAUERNHOF (standing) and BAUERNHOF'S BEARPAWS (OFA260)
Bernese Mountain Dogs owned and bred by Susan Shambeau, Rt. 2, Iola, Wisconsin 54945. (page 78)

• BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG

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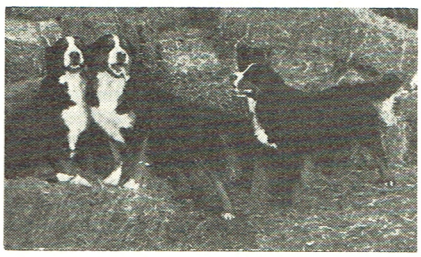
Bauerhof Berners Cover Story

Far from their Swiss homeland the Bernese Mountain Dog has adapted well to all sections of the United States. This month's cover features Champion Mona Von Bauernhof and Bauernhof's Bearpaws (OFA #260) from rural Iola, Wisconsin.

The Bernese are Working Dogs having a long history in Switzerland, where they are used as farm dogs, guarding and driving cattle and pulling milk carts. Today they are valued as loyal companions above all else, and have enthusiastically taken to backpacking and cross-country skiing. With their good disposition and ability to learn readily, they have recently shown themselves to be excellent tracking dogs, also. The breed



. . . THE BAUERNHOF BERNERS AT home. (Left to right) Shamrock's Molly Maguire, Ch. Mona Von Bauerhof and Bauernhof's Bearpaws, owned and bred by Susan Shambeau.

was recognized by the American Kennel Club in 1937, and since 1968 has been promoted in this country by the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America.

In Northern Wisconsin, the Bauernhof Berners have shown themselves to be willing workers on the farm as well as in the show ring. Champion Mona Von Bauernhof completed the requirements for her championship title at age 12 months and 8 days under the handling of Sandy Ongemach. Sandy also handled Mona's littermate, Ch. Sandusky's Greta V. Bauernhof (co-owned by Sandy Ongemach and Susan Shambeau), to her championship. Bauernhof's Bearpaws (certified OFA #260 at 27 months) exemplifies the strength, gentleness and character of this family-oriented breed, and spent his winter helping out on the farm by pulling sled-loads of wood and even hay for the horses!

Questions about the breed and expected Bauernhof litters will be answered promptly. Susan Shambeau, Bauernhof Berners, Rt. 2, Iola, Wisconsin 54945.

INTERNATIONAL BERNESE
j D. G. Rayne. BB, Maren's Ajax. WB, Kalyn's Brigette Bardot.

INTERNATIONAL HUSKIES
j H. F. Hoch. BB, Ch. Fireside's Hellbuster. BW, Sikisha's Star Trouper. WB, Shanoe's Arrow Lynn.

Siberian Husky Movement

By ROBERT CONYERS

When seen from the side, the Siberian should move smoothly, almost lightly, and yet convey strength. The front legs should reach well out and strike the ground beneath muzzle. The moving dog raises, or lowers its head to maintain balance, hence the strung-up dog cannot show good foreward reach. The legs and feet should be swung smoothly forward and placed on the ground, not lifted high and dropped. A dog that lifts its front feet high or swings them out and back, only to strike the ground beneath the ear, could never keep up with the rest of the team. The rear foot should slip right under the front foot, and leave its print covering that of the front foot. Actually, at a very fast trot, the print of the rear foot will

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QUALITY CONTROL

In Germany and Switzerland, dog breeding is strictly regulated.

Story and Photos by Bernd Gunter

THE DECISION TO SHARE OUR LIVES WITH A DOG WAS based on careful deliberation. We read many books about dogs, and after considerable research, we decided on a Bernese Mountain Dog (Berner Sennenhund), a breed that originated in Switzerland.

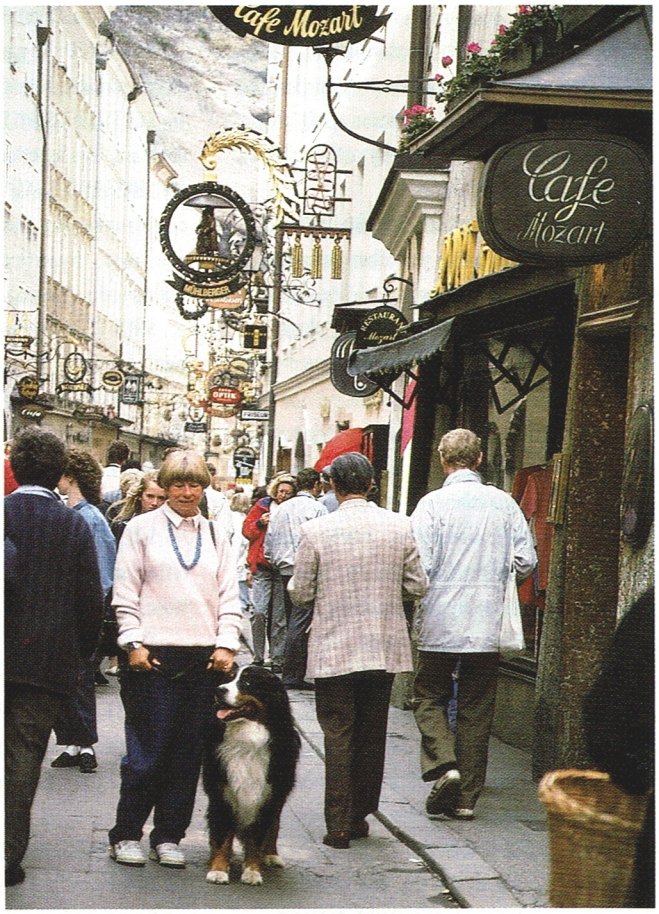
Our first step was to contact the German and Swiss national breed clubs. They provided us with lists of breeders who had or were expecting litters. We visited kennels in both countries, asked lots of questions, looked at puppies, their dams and, wherever possible, their sires.

When we chose a breeder and litter, it was because we liked the dogs, the people, the way the puppies were raised and—very important—the proximity to our home. We wanted to visit our pup as often as possible before we took him home.

The breeder agreed to sell the puppy to us only after screening us closely: Did we have experience with dogs? Did both of us work? Where did we live? Did we have a house of our own? Did we have a fenced yard? Did we have children, other pets or neighbors with pets? Where did we go on vacation? What activities did we pursue in our spare time?

CAREFUL SOCIALIZATION

The litter was raised in the home of the breeders, a German family with two teenage boys. Besides the dam, there were two other adult dogs, one male and one female. By the time we were able to take Max, whose registered name is Berri von der Horlache, he had been carefully exposed to a variety of socializing experiences: He had played with all the family members and the neighbors' children, had met strangers, had been taken on walks and rides in the car, had visited the veterinarian, was used to being combed and brushed and to wearing a collar. He had heard all kinds of loud sounds, from pop music to the vacuum cleaner, and was nearly housetrained. ➛



Max's temperament was shaped by the amount of socialization he received as a puppy. Here, he accompanies Christa Gunter while she shops in Salzburg, Austria.

In addition to passing the German and Swiss breeding tests, Max is an international champion, a difficult distinction to achieve.

After Max had spent a few weeks with us (we took a long vacation so we could be with him all the time), the breeders visited us to get a firsthand impression of his new home and to verify his well-being. In the meantime, we had continued to socialize Max, both with dogs and with people.

By the time Max reached his first birthday, he had developed into a fully experienced member of both the canine and the human worlds. He had ample opportunity to play and romp with other dogs, he went to obedience class, and he was fed such good things as beef, raw tripe, big calf bones, veggies and plenty of vitamins.

DECIDING TO BREED

As the months passed, Max grew to be a big and handsome fellow. No doubt, his family background had some part in that. After all, his dad was a famous champion and his mom, who just recently passed away at 13 years, was a real beauty. It was about halfway through his second year that we first began to think of passing his beauty and superb temperament on to future generations.

It was then that we began to understand that breeding means more than just mating two dogs. We learned that breeding in our country is subject to an elaborate system of rules and requirements (see boxed stories for details). The most important condition dogs must meet before they are certified for breeding is the passing of an assessment (*Korung*) for both conformation and temperament. In some breeds, including Bernese, dogs must be x-rayed for hip dysplasia before they can be registered for the assessment.

THE BREEDING TEST

Max, whose hips were scored "excellent," passed the German breeding test with honors when he was 2 years old. When we heard that the Swiss breeding certificate was even more difficult to obtain, we felt challenged to try that too. It would be something special for Max to be certified in the home country of his breed. Thus, on a crisp spring morning,

LITTER CONTROL

Once a dog is certified, it may be bred. Owners must verify certification, HD grade and identity of the other dog before the dogs are mated. The club must be notified by the stud owner of every breeding and by the breeder of every litter. A list of litters is available from the Swiss club on request. In Germany, matings and whelpings are published in the breed column of *Unser Rassehund*, the official monthly publication of the German Kennel Club.

A few days after a litter is whelped, an inspector from the club comes to look at the puppies and the mother, to assess the kennel environment and to remove dewclaws if this has not already been done by a veterinarian. In Switzerland, where only eight pups from any litter of BMDs may be raised no matter how healthy and pretty, the inspector advises the breeder as to which puppies to cull.

In Germany, culling is no longer required by the club, but on principal only seven puppies from a litter are raised; a greater number may be raised if the breeder can find a surrogate mother or if he agrees not to breed the bitch again for 18 months. Where culling is still practiced in Germany, it is with obviously mismarked or malformed puppies. If such a puppy is not culled, a stamp in the pedigree disqualifies it for breeding.

In both countries, bitches are allowed only one litter per year. In Germany, the age limit for a bitch to have a litter is 8 years. In Switzerland, there is no such age restriction. Males can be used at stud without an upper age limit in either country. In each country, approximately 900 puppies are raised annually from about 180 litters. In Switzerland, there is a kennel rating system. Kennels that meet the high standards set by the Swiss Kennel Club are given an award (*Goldenes Zwingersiegel*) that is proudly displayed at the kennel and appears on the pedigree.

After seven weeks, the inspector comes a second time to assess the litter, to check on vaccinations and deworming, to tattoo the registration number in the flap of the puppies' left ears and to write a final report for the national club. Only after this second step in quality control are pedigrees issued.

Club regulations in Germany do not permit puppies to be sold before they are 8 weeks old (the recommended age is 10 weeks). In Switzerland, where the minimum age is 10 weeks, many breeders prefer to keep the pups until they are 12 weeks old.

well before dawn, we drove to the test site in Switzerland.

The Swiss judges were amazed to see us. Only a few German BMDs had ever ventured to take the Swiss test, and none had passed.

The conformation part was easy. It was much the same as in Germany, where each dog is measured against the breed standard. The results are entered on a detailed test sheet. The owner receives one copy, and one copy remains on file with the club. In about 15 minutes, this part was finished. The following temperament test, however, was demanding. It took place on an open field surrounded by trees.

First, the testers asked about Max's age, home environment and training. This information enables the judges to objectively assess the dog's behavior.

Then the testers wanted to see how Max behaved with a group of strangers. The two judges and about a dozen helpers walked around on the field. We had to walk through the crowd without a leash. I was not allowed to use any obedience commands; only an occasional friendly and encouraging "Come on, Max" was permitted. People crossed our path, closed in on us, came from behind, patted Max, and waved their arms and hats at him. One man on crutches came especially close. At one point, all the people started clapping their hands. The testers and judges watched Max closely.

Next, the people formed a corridor, standing in two lines, shoulder to shoulder, facing each other, about four feet apart. I had to walk through this corridor two times, with Max following behind. The lines then moved closer together, narrowing the corridor to about two feet, and we walked through again.

After that, with Max sitting next to me, the people formed a wide circle around us. First, they walked toward us at normal speed; a second time they rushed in on us. When they were so close that their legs touched Max, I was asked to leave him there and to hide behind a tree, allowing one of them to hold him loosely by the collar. They wanted to see if he would panic in that situation without his handler. Max felt quite confident, though. When the man let go of him, he got up, sniffed at their legs, then walked leisurely out of the circle to rejoin me.

In the next part of the test, we had to navigate an obstacle course, again without a leash. First, we had to walk through acurtain of plastic streamers that someone moved as we passed underneath. Next, we walked over a large plastic tarp. When we had crossed it halfway, somebody pulled at it and rustled it. One man banged with a hammer against a piece of iron as we went past him, and another stepped from behind a tree and quickly opened an umbrella against Max. One person waved a huge sheet of cloth at him, and another rattled a plastic box filled with pebbles. Someone threw a wooden crate in our way, while someone else rattled a sack full of empty cans.

Obviously, they wanted to scare Max, but he wasn't impressed. Instead, he went to the sack to see what was in it and to get his teeth into it. They all seemed to like that. Finally, at one end of a long and narrow concrete tube, a judge held Max by the collar while I went to the other end. When I called, the man let go of Max, and he dashed through the tube to be with me again.

In the last part of the test, we had to walk across a field, side by side, again without a leash, toward a person holding a

handgun. When we were about 30 feet away, the man fired a shot in the air. Even though the sound of the gun was very loud, Max didn't mind. After all, he is used to hearing the fireworks on New Year's Eve and the military aircraft going over our house every now and then.

The test took about 45 minutes, and when all was finished, we received a detailed report for both conformation and temperament. Max was rated excellent in both areas. We were very proud that Max was the first BMD from Germany to pass the Swiss breeding test.

MAX'S BREEDING CAREER

Once word went around that Max was certified, breeders from Germany, Switzerland and other European countries brought females to breed to him. In Europe, bitches are normally not

EUROPEAN BREEDING TESTS

In Germany and Switzerland, the breeding of pedigreed dogs is closely controlled by national breed clubs. The breed clubs operate autonomously, yet within the framework of rules and requirements set by the national purebred dog organizations and their international umbrella organization, the Federation Cynologique Internationale/World Dog Association. The breed clubs generally try to ensure a high level of quality in their breed through a complex system of breeding regulations, breed assessments and litter control.

In Germany and Switzerland, purebred dogs must be certified by the national breed club before they can be bred. Certification is obtained by passing an assessment (*Korung*) that consists of two parts: a conformation test and a temperament test. The assessment is based on the breed standard, which, in the case of the Bernese, has been defined by the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Switzerland. This standard is effective in all member countries of the FCI.

The breeding test is administered by a committee (*Korkommission*) of the respective national club; in this case, the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Switzerland or the Swiss Sennenhund Club of Germany. Tests take place at least four times per year, each time in a different part of the country.

In Germany, a committee of three, two of whom must be breed specialist judges, assesses conformation and temperament at all tests throughout the year. This system allows for a maximum degree of continuity and reliability of the tests.

At the assessment in Switzerland, two judges each are responsible for conformation and for temperament. The conformation judges are breed specialist judges who are trained, examined and certified by the breed club, then licensed by the Swiss Kennel Club. The temperament evaluators also are trained, certified and appointed by the club. All persons involved in the breed assessment have considerable experience as breeders.

Conformation assessment in Germany focuses on 30 details (45 in Switzerland) as laid down in the standard, from dentition to bone structure, shape of ear to length of tail, height at the withers to movement.

Temperament evaluation criteria in Switzerland are the dog's relationship with the handler, the dog's attitude toward strangers, the dog's behavior in a group of people, the dog's reaction to unusual visual and acoustic stimuli, the dog's general temperament, the dog's reaction to the sound of gunshots, the dog's threshold of excitement and how quickly it calms down, and the dog's general disposition.

The annual average number of dogs assessed and certified is 30 males and 70 females in Germany and 20 males and 50 females in Switzerland. The minimum age for dogs is 15 months in Germany, 18 months in Switzerland. The requirements the dogs must fulfill before they will be admitted to the breeding test differ slightly between the two countries.

Both clubs require x-rays for hip dysplasia at a minimum age of 12 months. HD grades are registered with the national club and are entered on the pedigree.

Only dogs whose hips pass inspection are admitted to the breeding test. In Switzerland, each hip is graded separately. Recently, the Swiss club made x-raying for elbow dysplasia compulsory.

In breeds with different medical problems, different requirements exist. In Germany, for instance, the Greater Swiss must be x-rayed

shipped to or left with the stud, nor is it usual for studs to travel to render their service.

We were proud that Max was in great demand, and we were delighted to see him reproduce himself. On the other hand, we realized that stud service involves a great deal of physical and psychological stress for the dog. Thus, when Max had just turned 6 and was in his prime, we retired him. We are glad we did. We believe it is due to the stress-free, though by no means uneventful, life of the retiree, that today, at 10, Max is still going strong, looking and acting as young as ever.

Bernd Gunter lives in Freiolsheim, Germany, where he is a writer and photographer. His work has appeared in canine books, magazines and calendars in Germany, Switzerland, Great Britain and the United States.

for osteochondritis; the Entlebuch must be examined for hereditary eye diseases.

In Germany, a dog must have been rated SG (*Sehr Gut*, or Very Good) by a breed specialist judge at two specialty shows before it can be registered for the breed assessment. One of the SGs may come from the Junior Class (9 to 18 months), where SG is the best possible grade, but the second must be received in the Open Class (minimum age 15 months), where SG is the second best grade (V, *Vorzuglich*, or Excellent, is the best).

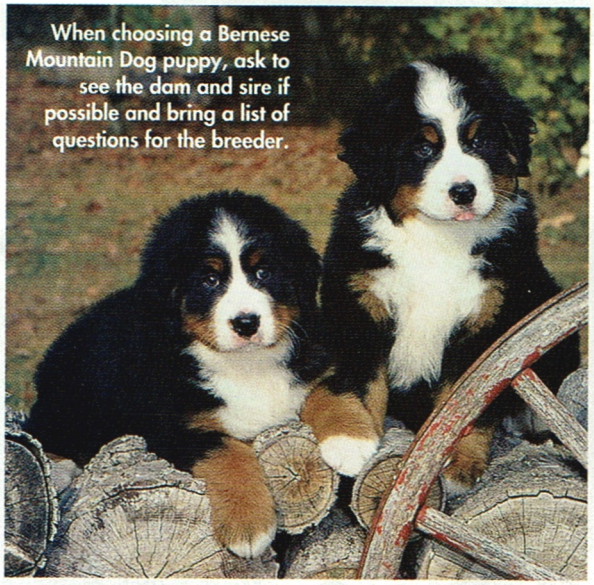
At one time in Germany, Bernese certification was for life, but some restrictions recently have been introduced. There is now temporary certification (for two years), if the judges believe there should be a probationary period. After this two-year period, extension of the certification may require another test or even a progeny test. In Switzerland, a stud dog is permitted 10 litters annually during the first three years. After that he can be used without limitation if at least 10 of his progeny have been x-rayed for hip and elbow dysplasia.

In both countries, certification can be revoked if a dog develops disqualifying faults, or if such faults were not realized at the time of the assessment. If a dog fails the breeding test, it can try again, unless it has clearly disqualifying faults. Sometimes certification is deferred. This may happen if a dog is not sufficiently mature, or if it shows some physical weakness that the judges assume will disappear, such as lameness.

In Switzerland, test results are published in the breed section of *Hunde*, the official biweekly publication of the Swiss Kennel Club. Lists of certified stud dogs are available through both clubs. Statistical information is published on the number of times a dog was used at stud. In Germany, all certified dogs are listed in an annual breed record (*Zuchtbuch*), complete with detailed test results and photographs. The yearbook is a valuable source of information for breeders looking for a suitable stud for their bitches.

Part of the Swiss breeding test involves rattling a tarp while dog and owner walk over it.

The Bewitching BERNESE



When choosing a Bernese Mountain Dog puppy, ask to see the dam and sire if possible and bring a list of questions for the breeder.

© CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE FURRY KIND

There is no more noble an image than a stately Bernese Mountain Dog proudly pulling an old-fashioned milk cart down the main street of a small town during a local parade. This is a working breed, capable of droving cattle one minute, pulling a cart to market the next and guarding its family and home in its spare time. But don't make the mistake of thinking this is a dog without humor. As Teresa Thompson, co-chair of the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America's public education committee tells it, many Berners love to play the clown.

Once owned by Stone Age farmers in Switzerland, the sturdy, impressive Berner has been pulling carts and heartstrings for generations

"Our girl Xenta vom Barimatteli will sometimes mimic the sounds that my husband and I make when we're, ahh, breathing loudly in our sleep . . . in other words—snoring," Thompson says. "She will sometimes get my attention and then make the sound like my husband when she's close to his side of the bed. She then pulls her lips in a big smile and dances and wags her tail. My husband does not find this particularly amusing because he does not recognize the sound as the one that emanates from him when he is asleep. He does think it's hilarious, however, when Xenta does the same trick on my side of the bed, making a sound that is unfamiliar to me!"

Indeed, these angelic, gentle souls have a bit of the devil in them!

PRIDE OF THE SWISS ALPS

First evidence of the Bernese Mountain Dog's ancestors dates back to the dogs used by Stone Age farmers living in the area we now call Switzerland. Popular belief has held that these medium-sized dogs later were crossed with mastiff-type dogs brought by invading Roman armies, which augmented their size and guarding ability. Recent research has shown, however, that dogs close to the size of today's Berner were present long before the Romans arrived. It is very possible the Romans actually recruited local dogs for their needs instead of importing their own. Either way, when the Romans left these dogs were put to work on the farm once again.

Rural life demanded that every member of the household, whether human or beast, earned its keep, and the dog was no exception. Swiss farm dogs were developed for several occupations—droving cattle, pulling carts to market and guarding the family and livestock. Consequently, farmers bred for a strong dog that was obedient but also could think for itself.

The relative isolation of Swiss farmers led to a fairly uniform national dog; however, separate breeds did distinguish themselves in the different regions of Switzerland. Of the four breeds that originated in the rural areas of the country, the breed we call the Bernese Mountain Dog (Berner Sennenhunde) is distinguished by its long coat. The three shorthaired breeds are the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog (Great Swiss Sennenhunde), the Appenzeller (Appenzeller Sennenhunde) and the Entlebucher (Entlebucher Sennenhunde). All four breeds share the same coloring. Currently, only the Bernese Mountain Dog and the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog are recognized by the American Kennel Club.

By the 1800s the sport of dogs was growing in Switzerland, and interest in "new" dogs from other countries began to contribute to the disappearance of the farmers' dog. In isolated pockets, however, the original Swiss farm dog still could be found. A breed referred to as the Dürrbachler (the forefather of today's Berner) still was used as a draft

Berners are slightly longer than they are tall, but their bone structure and full body give them a square appearance.

© ISABELLE FRANCAIS

By Kim D.R. Dearth

MOUNTAIN DOG

dog and drover in the upper mountain valleys in the canton of Bern. A few of these dogs were discovered by fanciers and brought to the more cosmopolitan area of Burgdorf. In 1904 seven of these dogs were judged for the first time in a dog show hosted by the International Swiss Kennel Club. The popularity of these entries led to the breed's induction into the Swiss Stud Book.

In 1907 the Schweizerische Dürrbachler Klub was founded under the influence of judge and breed enthusiast Professor Albert Heim. Through breeding, he made several adjustments, such as straightening the spitzlike tail and removing the double dewclaws, and he spearheaded the renaming of the breed. In 1908 the Berner Sennenhunde (Bernese Alpine Herdsman Dog) officially was recognized in Switzerland.

The first two Berners to arrive in America were imported in 1926. Even intervention on the part of the Swiss Stud Book registrar, however, could not persuade the AKC to register the dogs. Ten years later another pair was brought to the United States, and this time fanciers were successful in sparking the AKC's interest. The Bernese Mountain Dog officially was recognized as a member of the AKC's Working Group in 1937.

The breed grew only slightly in popularity until World War II, when importation of most breeds was halted. After the war, dogs again began to arrive from Switzerland. In 1968 breed enthusiasts banded together to establish the BMDCA; the club officially was incorporated in 1972. Since then, the Berner has enjoyed moderate popularity. As of 1997, the Bernese Mountain Dog ranked No. 62 out of the 145 AKC-registered breeds, with 2,022 dogs listed.

Back in Switzerland, an interesting development in the breed in the 1940s and 1950s would influence Berner lines both in its native land and abroad. Some rural farmers had been breeding for unstable temperaments for years (in the mistaken belief this would make better watchdogs), and this had left some Berners insecure and aggressive. An accidental mating with the even-tempered Newfoundland seemed to spark a solution, and descendants of this litter went on to influence almost every Bernese line seen today in both Switzerland and America.

WORKING BEAUTY

The Bernese Mountain Dog's working history still plays an important role today in the breed's standard. The Berner, with its shining, flowing coat and strong, sturdy stature, truly is striking. Although its beauty is undeniable, the AKC standard demands the Berner retain the physical traits necessary to accomplish the draft and droving work for which it was bred. It must be

© CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE FURRY KIND

Tricolor, the only color accepted in the show ring, consists of a jet black ground and symmetrical rust and white markings.

CARTING: Getting Involved For The Long Haul

The Bernese Mountain Dog was bred for draft work, and today's owners often discover carting fills their pets' need for employment. Carting dogs can help with yardwork, entertain children with wagon rides and participate in community events such as parades. (Check local ordinances beforehand; some areas have laws regarding carting.)

If your dog meets the age and fitness requirements, you can get started or at least introduce pups to their future equipment. A cart can be a standard two-wheeled cart or a wagon, travois, sled or toboggan. Two harness types exist: the siwash, a shoulder/neck collar, and the buckle harness, which fastens around the dog's ribcage and across its chest. Because the buckle variety can slide upward and press on the dog's throat, the siwash is considered the safer harness for drafting.

Begin by letting the dog get accustomed to wearing the harness, then attach two ropes it can pull along behind it. Next, attach lightweight poles to the harness and connect these poles to each other with another pole. This helps the dog understand the eventual width of the cart. When your Berner is comfortable "carting" the poles, substitute the empty cart. Consult a book or a competitor for more training tips. Take things gradually and praise dogs often.

For owner/dog teams interested in competing, the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America holds drafting tests to celebrate and develop this natural Berner ability. Dogs can compete alone or as a brace. Individual dogs compete in one of two classes: Novice Draft or Open Draft, and the titles earned by a qualifying performance are Novice Draft Dog and Draft Dog, respectively.

Although the exercises generally are the same, there are variations in requirements for Novice and Open. Exercises cover Basic Control, in which the dog must Heel and Recall; Harness and Hitch, in which the dog demonstrates a willingness to be harnessed and hitched to the draft rig; Practical Draft Work, in which the dog shows its working ability by performing specific tasks (such as maneuvering in a narrow area and maintaining control during distractions); Group Stay, in which groups of dogs remain on a Stay while hitched; and Distance Freight Haul, in which teams travel a half-mile outdoor course over natural terrain. The weight a team is required to pull during this last exercise depends on the level of competition and the team's own weight.

As always, the human/canine bond is paramount. If you find your dog doesn't enjoy carting, don't continue. Most Berners, however, will latch onto this work with relish, and these bonding interactions, whether for fun or competition, will be priceless.

© PATRICK G. HATCH
Give your dog an energy outlet that is part of its heritage—carting!

strong and agile, and it must display a gait that shows off these attributes.

Although both males and females should appear impressive, males should be distinctly masculine while females appear feminine. Although Berners are slightly longer than they are tall, their sturdy bone and full body make them appear square. Males are somewhat taller than females, measuring 25 inches to 27½ inches at the withers vs. 23 inches to 26 inches for bitches.

The chest is deep and well-sprung, and the back is broad and firm. Above all, this dog is muscular and strong as befitting its vocation. The bushy tail, which is carried low when the dog is at rest, can swirl upward when the dog is alert but never should curl or curve over the back.

The Berner's head is its crowning glory. The dog's intelligence and gentle nature are evident in its alert, yet laid-back expression. A broad, flat skull is another feature of this gentle giant. The eyes must be dark brown—blue eyes lead to an automatic disqualification in the show ring. The rounded, medium-sized ears hang close to the head when the dog is resting but rise forward when the Berner is excited or on guard. The strong muzzle is topped by a pure black nose. Dentition is important—teeth must meet in a scissors bite; an overshot or undershot bite is a serious fault.

© ISABELLE FRANCAIS
When the Berner is resting, its ears hang close to its head; when excited, they rise forward.

The glorious coat is shown in its natural state without excessive trimming. The thick, moderately long outer coat can be either slightly wavy or straight, and it covers a soft undercoat. The only acceptable color is tricolor; although an occasional red-and-white Berner is born, dogs of this color are disqualified from the show ring. Tricolor consists of a shining, jet black ground color and symmetrical rust and white markings. White legs or a white collar are serious faults, and any ground color other than black is a disqualification.

The Bernese Mountain Dog's temperament is self-confident, alert and good-natured, according to the standard. Although it may be aloof with strangers, it never must be shy or aggressive.

A HOMEBODY AT HEART

Although it is true the Berner's good looks draw many of its fans, its personality is what truly hooks them. Although this is a working breed, it needs to be with people. A Berner's favorite spot is by—or on—its human companion. These dogs do not realize their substantial size and why their "people" might not want them to dive into their laps.

"Berners excel at leaning and sitting on their masters' feet," says Ruth Reynolds, Thompson's co-chair of the BMDCA public education committee. She stresses that a Berner's greatest joy is being by its owner.

The Bernese Mountain Dog also is adept at getting attention, whether through a well-placed nudge against a hand surely meant for petting or an endearing "hug" around its owner's leg. Combine this with the Berner's ear-to-ear grin and you can see how setting house rules for this breed might be difficult. Remembering that an endearing, little puppy will grow into about 90 pounds of muscle, however, may help new owners remain firm.

"Bernese Mountain Dog puppies need strong leaders in their humans," Reynolds says. "Because the correct temperament for a Bernese is that of a true working dog, the Bernese should be assertive in some situations . . . if necessary. 'Necessary' to a dog may be simply taking charge when no one else is clearly in charge."

Training should be based on mutual respect between dog and owner and use positive motivation and rewards for appropriate responses. This breed does not respond to harsh corrections and indeed will become more stubborn if such methods are used.

"If their will to serve is developed early using positive reinforcement, they are unmatched in loyalty," Reynolds says.

As stated in the standard, this breed can take its time to warm up to strangers, but a dog with a proper temperament will not be shy or aggressive. With its people, the Berner is all-out loving and needs to receive as much love and atten-

tion as it gives to be happy. This dog cannot be relegated to living in the back yard without some serious behavioral consequences. This breed also does not do well if left alone in the house for long hours each day, which may cause it to become destructive.

One form of destruction that is wreaked by many Berners and is somewhat difficult to control is the breed's penchant for digging holes in the yard during the summer heat. The dogs avoid the high temperatures by resting in the cooler dirt. Bernese Mountain Dogs are extremely intolerant of the heat and should be kept in air conditioning if possible during the summer months or longer in warm climates. If left outside these dogs will create their own solution, and your yard will end up being the loser.

"Training the dog to limit excavation to certain areas is a challenge but is possible," Reynolds advises.

© ISABELLE FRANCAIS

To avoid possible injuries, this large breed must not be required to jump hurdles or pull carts until its bones have stopped growing.

Keeping the dog cool and proper training may prevent holes, but owners still must make sure that their pets can work off excess energy. A fenced yard is important for exercising this working breed, but don't stop there. Supervised romps in school playgrounds or fenced areas of parks, or even runs on retractable leashes can provide the stimulation the Berner craves. Romps with canine friends can offer the exercise essential to keep your dog in shape. Reynolds advises city dwellers to provide their dogs with a minimum of two 30-minute brisk walks per day.

Owners must be cautious, however, when exercising puppies. Like most large breeds, Berner puppies can become injured if exercised too vigorously. To avoid this risk further, Berners also should not be asked to jump hurdles or pull carts while their bones are still growing.

The Bernese Mountain Dog's eventual size will affect its feeding regimen as a pup. Although there are as many feeding protocols as there are breeders, many recommend switching Berners from puppy food to an adult maintenance food at a much younger age than smaller breeds. Indeed, Reynolds starts her puppies on adult food from the beginning.

"Our pups are eating adult formula food when weaned, as we have found our dogs soundest when 'grown off' slowly rather than pushed to mature as pups," Reynolds says. She feels the most important thing is to question breeders on why they have chosen a particular brand of food and style of feeding. They should have a reason based on experience; perhaps they have seen the diet create specific positive outcomes in their pups.

As stated above, the Berner lives for its family above all else. In general the breed is excellent with children, although its size can be hazardous to toddlers, who can be knocked down easily during play. In its native Switzerland the children of the family usually drove the dog cart to market, necessitating the Berner's gentleness and biddability. As with all dogs, however, the Bernese Mountain Dog should not be left unsupervised with small children.

The Berner's love of family extends to other pets as well. If introduced to them as a puppy the Berner will accept cats, other dogs, etc., as pals, as is befitting a former livestock dog.

"They should be exposed to all kinds of stimuli they will be expected to encounter in life when young," Reynolds says. "These are big dogs that need training to respect other living creatures."

Thompson's Berners have developed an exceptional relationship with her cats. "In fact, the cats like to creep over and back into the kitty parking spaces between the dogs' front paws where the Berner 'furnaces' are pumping out intense heat," she says. "The Berners seem to enjoy the contact, and the cats purr like crazy."

This sizable breed is covered with a large amount of fur; however, grooming is relatively easy and consists of weekly brushing and bathing only when dirty. Potential owners should be aware, however, that this breed does shed copiously; fastidious housekeepers need not apply!

Although Berners make wonderful companions, Thompson stresses that there are some negatives to living with the breed. "They are big dogs, and they come in a total doggie package," she says. "At different times of the year there will be hair wafting up into the refrigerator and sloppy pawprints on the carpet. Berner fur becomes a part of the owner's diet."

WORKING TALENTS

Although the Bernese Mountain Dog makes an excellent pet, its working heritage should not be neglected. This dog thrives if given a job to do. Obedience trials offer one alternative. Most Berners can obtain Companion Dog or Companion Dog Excellent obedience titles, although the precision work of Obedience Trial Champion titles is somewhat

NATIONAL BREED CLUB

The Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America World Wide Web site: www.bmd.org/bmd/bmdca.html.

Mary Durham, BMDCA secretary, P.O. Box 1158, Groten, Mass. 01450.

To request BMDCA information and general breed information, including regional contacts, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Teresa Thompson, BMDCA public education committee co-chair, 2120 S. Reserve St., No. 370, Missoula, Mont. 59801, or send an e-mail request for information to Ruth Reynolds, BMDCA public education committee co-chair, at BMDCA@PHONL.com.

To request information on regional rescue groups, send a SASE to Beth Friichtenicht, 2386 105th St., Aledo, Ill. 61231.

For help with other Bernese Mountain Dog matters, call (850) 594-4636 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. CST.

MAGAZINE

The Alpenhorn is published six times a year by the BMDCA. The magazine covers showing, breeding, health issues, training, club news, etc. Members of the club receive a free subscription; nonmember subscriptions are $20 per year.

Contact: Jack Lytle, 1338 W. Park St., Arlington Heights, Ill. 60005; jackly@aol.com.

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Diana Cochrane, *The Bernese Mountain Dog*, Westgrove House, Warwickshire, Great Britain, 1987.

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VIDEO

The American Kennel Club's *Bernese Mountain Dog* breed video, #VVT605, is available through the AKC Video Fulfillment Dept., 5580 Centerview Drive, No. 200, Raleigh, N.C. 27606; (919) 233-9780.

more challenging. As mentioned above, a firm but gentle hand is all-important in molding the Berner's behavior.

Tracking, agility and flyball can work your dog's mind and body, all the while increasing your ability to work as a team with your pet. For a more low-key, yet self-satisfying pursuit, therapy work allows your dog to share its docile good humor with the sick or elderly.

And, of course, there is carting! To see a happy-go-lucky Berner become serious and dedicated when hooked into harness is to experience a piece of history. Although not every Bernese Mountain Dog is guaranteed to pick up this ancient pursuit, many enjoy it so much you'll wonder how your dog ever survived without it. Community parades often supply an outlet, and the BMDCA offers draft trials with titles to be earned.

Thompson's Berners enjoy informal carting around her property. "Our boy Toby likes to help us work around the farm," she relates. "For example, we hitch him to his cart, and he walks alongside of us when we're fixing the fence. We put the fencing supplies in the cart, and he brings them along for us. He has also hauled rocks, tree prunings and yard waste. His favorite is pulling a cart full of lightweight children!"

HEALTH ISSUES

Berners and their owners can enjoy numerous activities during their years together; however, sadly for Berner lovers, this generally is not a long-lived breed. Although the average age is 8 to 10 years, some subsist longer. As the Swiss saying goes, "Three years a young dog, three years a good dog and three years an old dog. All else is a gift from God."

The Bernese Mountain Dog is prone to a number of genetic maladies. An international database called the Berner-Garde Foundation has been set up to collect health information and statistics on the breed in the hope that this open resource will help control genetic disease.

Like most large breeds, hip dysplasia is seen in the Berner. This progressive, degenerative joint disease ranges from mild, asymptomatic cases to severe cases that result in euthanasia. All breeding stock should be evaluated by the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals, the Institute for Genetic Disease Control in Animals or the PennHIP® system as being free of this condition. Elbow dysplasia also is seen in the Berner. Other possible orthopedic conditions are panosteitis (inflammation of the bone in large-boned, rapidly growing puppies, evidenced by lameness that migrates from one leg to another) and osteochondritis dissecans (cartilage lesions or fragments).

The hereditary eye disease progressive retinal atrophy is another problem. All breeding dogs should be screened yearly for this disease, which causes blindness, by a board-certified ophthalmologist, and the results should be recorded with the Canine Eye Registration Foundation or the above-mentioned GDC. Other eye problems that can occur include entropion (inverted eyelids) and ectropion (exposure of the conjunctiva).

Cancer frequently affects the Bernese Mountain Dog and shortens many lives. Of the inherited forms of this disease, histiocytosis, a condition marked by an abnormal appearance of histiocytes in the blood, is the most common. Mastocytomas, mast cell tumors, also have a genetic component, and osteosarcomas, tumors involving the tissue concerned in bone growth and repair, still are being studied for heritability. A tumor registry has been founded by the BMDCA to further research cancer in the Bernese Mountain Dog.

Although not strictly a genetic problem, heat stroke also is a serious concern. The Bernese Mountain Dog must be protected diligently from overheating. Air conditioning is best, but if your Berner must be outside, be sure to supply heavy shade, lots of fresh water and a wading pool if possible. Also,

carefully monitor young dogs that innocently may overexercise themselves.

BUYING A BERNER

A healthy dog with a sound temperament should be your top priority when looking for a Bernese Mountain Dog. Talk to your local breed club to get the names of reputable breeders in your area. But don't stop there; you will want to investigate each one fully to find the best breeder to supply your puppy.

Be sure to ask about the health problems mentioned above. But, as Reynolds points out, just because breeders are aware of health problems in their breed does not guarantee they address them in their breeding programs.

"Knowing about health problems and doing something about them are two different matters," she states. "Producing long-lived animals without serious health problems is most often achieved with not only knowledge of the problems but concerted research effort in the presence of disease in the families of animals used for breeding."

Ask for references of people who have obtained dogs from each breeder. Inquire about temperament and what activities the breeder enjoys with his or her dogs. Although championships are not guarantees of a healthy dog, people involved in aspects of dogdom usually are more likely to be educated on genetics than those who do not participate in shows or sporting events.

Once you have narrowed down your search, visit each breeder who has made your cut. Are their facilities clean and well-maintained? Ask to see the dam, puppies and sire if possible. Are they all friendly and calm? Although Berners probably will not run up to greet a stranger, they should not be sullen or withdrawn.

Ask to see pedigrees and health certificates proving genetic testing has been done. Reynolds and Thompson believe it is important to ask about the ages and causes of death in your prospective puppy's family tree.

"A dam with all certifications and three prior litters, none of the offspring of which have been evaluated for hips and elbows and whose littermates are all burdened with a variety of health challenges may not be in the range of risk you are willing to take," Reynolds says. "The fact that she is a champion from a long line of champions may not be enough to assure her pups a good chance of living long, healthy lives."

Once you have decided on a breeder, be honest about what you want out of your dog. Are you simply looking for a pet, or do you want to participate in obedience or other sporting events? The breeder who has lived day in and day out with this litter will be the best person to help match you with a puppy.

The price for a Berner pup ranges from $800 to $1,500, with only some breeders distinguishing between show and pet. Be sure to ask for a contract stating all terms of the sale before putting down a deposit; this protects both breeder and owner. Most breeders will require pet-quality dogs be spayed or neutered to ensure only the best specimens are bred in the future. Reputable breeders will offer to take back a Berner for any reason during its lifetime if you are unable to keep it, and they also will make themselves available to answer any questions you might have throughout the lifetime of the dog.

* * * * *

Although the Bernese Mountain Dog is not for everyone, those who feel they can handle its exercise, work requirements and need for human companionship will be rewarded with a gentle, loyal friend. And, with a little bit of training, this breed also can provide a fun new way to haul groceries!

Kim Dearth writes about issues concerning dogs and cats from her home near Madison, Wis. She and her husband live with one canine and two feline research assistants.

Berner Sennenhunde
in den USA

Genau sechzig Jahre sind vergangen, seit der American Kennel Club (AKC) der Rasse Berner Sennenhund unter dem Namen Bernese Mountain Dog offizielle Anerkennung verlieh und sie in die Gruppe der "Working Dogs" (Arbeitshunde) aufnahm. In jenem Jahr 1937 wurden dann auch gleich die ersten beiden Berner Sennenhunde durch den AKC registriert. Bis zur Mitte der sechziger Jahre blieb die Rasse jedoch praktisch unbekannt. Die Gründung des landesweiten Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America (BMDCA) erfolgte erst 1968. Seither haben Rasse, Zucht und Club einen beachtlichen Aufschwung erlebt. Der BMDCA hat heute gut 900 Mitglieder. Die Zahl der im Jahre 1996 eingetragenen Welpen betrug 1822, bei insgesamt 436 Würfen, das sind mehr als in der Schweiz oder in Deutschland.

Prof. Dr. Bernd Günter

Seit 1976 findet alljährlich eine Clubschau des BMDCA statt (National Specialty). Dieses Ereignis wird jedoch nicht vom nationalen Club veranstaltet, sondern von einem der inzwischen achtzehn Regionalclubs. Ähnlich wie bei der Ausschreibung für die Durchführung der Olympischen Spiele bewerben sich die "Regional Clubs" schon Jahre zuvor um den Zuschlag durch das zuständige Gremium des BMDCA. Jeder ausrichtende Club ist bestrebt, die Leistung des Vorjahres noch zu übertreffen, sei es durch einen besonders attraktiven Austragungsort, eine besonders ausstellerfreundliche Organisation, ein besonders spektakuläres Rahmenprogramm.

Berner-Sennenhund-Festival in den Rocky Mountains

Die diesjährige Clubschau – veranstaltet vom Bernese Mountain Dog Club of the Rockies – stand unter dem Motto: "Taking the Specialty to New Heights", auf deutsch etwa: "Wir führen die Clubschau zu neuen Höhen." Beide Aspekte dieses doppelsinnigen Versprechens wurden denn auch in glänzender Weise eingelöst. Die Veranstaltung fand in tatsächlich nie zuvor erlebter Höhe statt, nämlich in dem 2500 Meter hoch gelegenen Urlaubsort Estes Park in den Rocky Mountains von Colorado. Eigentlicher Ausstellungsort war eine weiträumige und komfortabel ausgestattete Ferienanlage am Eingang des Rocky Mountain National Park. Es war die ideale Szenerie für ein Berner-Sennenhund-Treffen. Natur pur: Wald, Wiesen, Bäche, Seen, grasende Elche und als spektakuläre Kulisse die schneebedeckten Gipfel der Viertausender.

Sympathische und attraktive Traditionspflege: Wagenziehen zur Bewahrung rassetypischer Arbeitstugenden des Berner Sennenhundes.

Schade nur, dass die eigentliche Ausstellung trotz strahlenden Wetters in einer Halle stattfand.
Amerikanische Hunde-Ereignisse zeichnen sich in der Regel durch erstklassige Organisationsqualität aus. So war es auch in diesem Fall. Es war zudem beeindruckend zu sehen, welches Potential an Begeisterung, Engagement und professioneller Kompetenz in einem Regionalclub mit lediglich etwa 140 Mitgliedern freigesetzt werden kann. In fast zweijähriger Vorbereitungsarbeit hatten die aktiv beteiligten Mitglieder des BMDC of the Rockies eine Veranstaltung auf die Beine gestellt, die sich durch perfekte Organisation, bemerkenswerte Ausstellerfreundlichkeit, überaus angenehme Atmosphäre und grossartige Gastlichkeit auszeichnete und die so zu einem unvergesslichen Erlebnis wurde: ein wunderschönes Berner-Fest der Superlative, das sich über fünf (!) Tage erstreckte.
Kein Wunder, dass man sich nicht über mangelnde Beteiligung sorgen musste. Die Zahl der Aussteller und der Hunde stellte wieder einmal alles in den Schatten, was man von vergleichbaren Anlässen in Europa kennt. Der dank zahlreicher schöner Foto-Inserate sehr attraktive Ausstellungskatalog verzeichnete 482 (!) Hunde. Viele Aussteller hatten darüber hinaus noch weitere Hunde mitgebracht, so dass sich am Ende wohl über 600 Berner Sennenhunde in den Rocky Mountains eingefunden hatten. Aus allen Teilen des riesigen Landes und aus Kanada waren die Aussteller und Besucher angereist. Manche hatten Tausende von Kilometern per Flugzeug zurückgelegt, andere hatten die Mühen einer drei-, viertägigen Anreise per Auto oder Wohnmobil in Kauf genommen. Nicht wenige "opferten" dafür fast ihren gesamten, knappen Jahresurlaub.

Was dem einen sein Schaukel-Pferd, ist dem Anderen sein Schaukel-Berner.

Aus allen Teilen des riesigen Landes und aus Kanada waren die Aussteller und Besucher angereist.

Mehr als nur eine Ausstellung

An allen Tagen gab es ein vielseitiges und attraktives Rahmenprogramm mit diversen Wettbewerben, Vorführungen, Seminaren und Workshops: Tracking (Fährtenarbeit), Draft (Wagenziehen), Agility, Obedience, Freestyle (Tanzkür mit dem Hund), Futurity (eine spezielle Form der Nachzucht-Bewertung), Junior Showmanship, Puppy und Veteran Sweepstakes (Sonderwettbewerbe ausser Konkurrenz für ganz junge und alte Hunde) sowie die Ausstellungskategorien Brace (Paarklasse), Team (Gruppen von vier und mehr Hunden), Stud Dog und Brood Bitch (Zuchtrüden bzw. -hündinnen mit Nachkommen). Beeindruckend auch der stolze Auftritt der Championatsträger mit ihren festlich gekleideten Menschen in der "Parade of Titleholders". Natürlich gab es auch Vorträge und Workshops zu diversen Themen. Die seit einigen Jahren aktive Stiftung "Berner-Garde", die es sich zur Aufgabe gemacht hat, genetisch bedingte Gesundheitsprobleme des Berner Sennenhundes zu erforschen, stellte ihre Arbeit vor und gab Einblick in ihre umfangreiche Datenbank. Diese Informationsquelle ist für jedermann zugänglich und bietet den Züchtern ein transparentes und effizientes Instrument bei der Zuchtplanung. Daneben gab es natürlich zahlreiche Gelegenheiten zu geselligem Miteinander und zu Hundegesprächen, sei es bei einer Tasse Kaffee, bei einem Picknick oder bei einem festlichen Bankett. Für die jungen Besucher wurde an allen Tagen ein unterhaltsames Kinderprogramm angeboten, das von Rollschuhlaufen über Schwimmen bis zur Pizza-Party reichte.
Über alle Ereignisse und Ergebnisse wurde täglich in einer eigenen Ausstellungszeitung berichtet. Über die Mail List berner-l waren die Resultate der Wettbewerbe überdies schon wenige Minuten nach Abschluss der jeweiligen Kategorie im Internet zugänglich. Die Clubschau des BMDCA ist jeweils auch Anlass für die jährliche Mitgliederversammlung, für das

Liebenswerte Holzschnitzereien als Beispiel lebendiger Kreativität im Berner Sennen-Kunsthandwerk.

Dem amerikanischen Ausstellungsreglement entsprechend, vollzog sich das Richten bei Hündinnen und Rüden in den folgenden regulären Klassen: Puppies 6–9 Monate; Puppies 9–12 Monate; Hunde 12–18 Monate; Novice Class (Hunde, die noch keine Championatspunkte erhalten haben); Bred-by-Exhibitor Class (Hunde, deren Aussteller gleichzeitig ihr Züchter ist); American-Bred Class (hier dürfen z. B. Import-Hunde nicht ausgestellt werden); Open Class (alle Hunde ab 6 Monate, die noch nicht Champions sind). Mehrfach-Starts sind möglich.

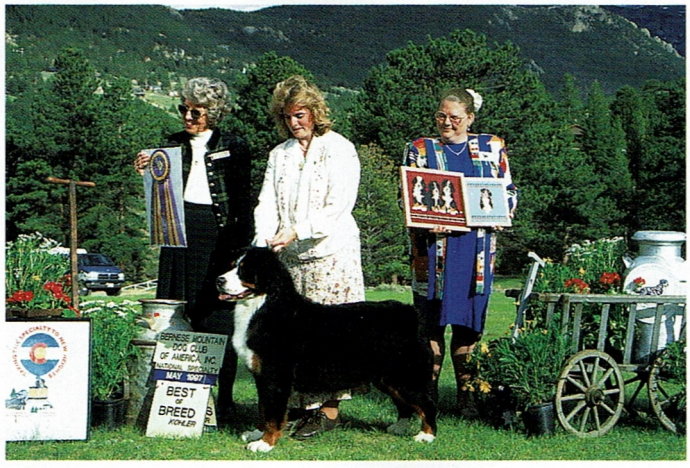
Der Ablauf vor und im Ausstellungsring vollzog sich reibungslos unter der präzisen Regie der kompetenten "Ring Stewards". Das Richten ging, wie üblich, in einer für europäische Beobachter verblüffenden Schnelligkeit vonstatten. Die Einzelbegutachtung eines Hundes dauerte nicht mehr als zwei Minuten; darauf folgte eine Runde der ganzen Klasse im Lauf, und schon war die Entscheidung getroffen und die Siegesbänder (Ribbons) verteilt. Eine mündliche Urteilsbegründung oder einen schriftlichen Richterbericht gibt es bei amerikanischen Ausstellungen generell nicht.

Die Einzelbegutachtung eines Hundes dauerte nicht mehr als zwei Minuten; darauf folgte eine Runde der ganzen Klasse im Lauf, und schon war die Entscheidung getroffen und die Siegesbänder (Ribbons) verteilt.

Treffen des Kontaktgremiums der regionalen Clubs (Regional Club Council) und für die Sitzung des Vorstandes. Selbstverständlich bezahlen sämtliche Funktionäre ihre Reise- und Aufenthaltskosten stets aus eigener Tasche – Spesen gibt es nicht. An allen Tagen stellten Regionalclubs ihre Waren und Künstler ihre Werke zum Verkauf: liebevoll gefertigte und zum Teil beeindruckend schöne Berner-Kunst-Objekte, Bilder, Plastiken, Holzschnitzereien, Stick-, Strick- und Web-Arbeiten, allerlei Bemaltes und Bedrucktes, Berner Souvenirs in überwältigender Vielfalt.

Die für jeden Besucher bereitgestellte Geschenktasche enthielt neben Informationsmaterial, netten Souvenirs, Futterproben für den Hund und Schweizer Bonbons und Namensschilder für die Menschen auch Plastiksäckchen zur Beseitigung von Hundehäufchen. Diese Säckchen wurden selbstverständlich auch benützt, so dass Wege, Wald und Wiesen erfreulicherweise frei von Hundekot waren.

Obwohl die Zahl der Hunde gewaltig war, hatte man – wegen der Weitläufigkeit der Anlage – ausserhalb der Wettbewerbe selten mehr als ein paar von ihnen gleichzeitig im Blick. Zwei Dinge waren für europäische Augen besonders auffällig: Frei laufende Hunde sah man überhaupt nicht. Alle waren immer und überall angeleint – sogar bei Spaziergängen im freien Gelände. Schlenderte man durch die Anlage, sah man vor den Chalets oder auf den Balkonen der Gastzimmer Berner Sennenhunde, die für die Ausstellung zurechtgemacht wurden: Da wurde gewaschen, gefönt, effiliert, geschnitten, gepudert und gesprüht, was das Zeug hielt. Als Ergebnis dieser "Verschönerung" präsentierten sich dann im Ausstellungsring allzuviele Hunde in Uniform-gestyltem Haarkleid – obwohl doch der amerikanische Standard ausdrücklich fordert, der Berner sei in natürlichem Fellzustand ("natural coat") zu präsentieren.



Best of Breed: Der schönste Berner Sennenhund war diesmal eine Hündin (CH Nashem's Taylor Maid).

Professionalismus in Perfektion

Der eigentliche Schönheitswettbewerb erstreckte sich über zweieinhalb Tage. In den regulären Klassen wurden insgesamt 411 Berner Sennenhunde der Richterin vorgestellt. Die Richter bei den Clubschauen des BMDCA werden übrigens auf Basis-demokratische Weise bestimmt. Zunächst wird die gesamte Mitgliederschaft eingeladen, geeignete Kandidaten vorzuschlagen. Danach wird per Briefwahl abgestimmt und der Kandidat bzw. die Kandidatin mit der höchsten Stimmenzahl dann eingeladen.

Best of Opposite Sex: Schönster Rüde der diesjährigen Clubschau (CH De-Li's Foregone Conclusion).

Best of Winners: Den Ausstich um den Sieg in den regulären Klassen gewann der Rüde (Heartlight's Stand By Me).

Glanzvolles Finale

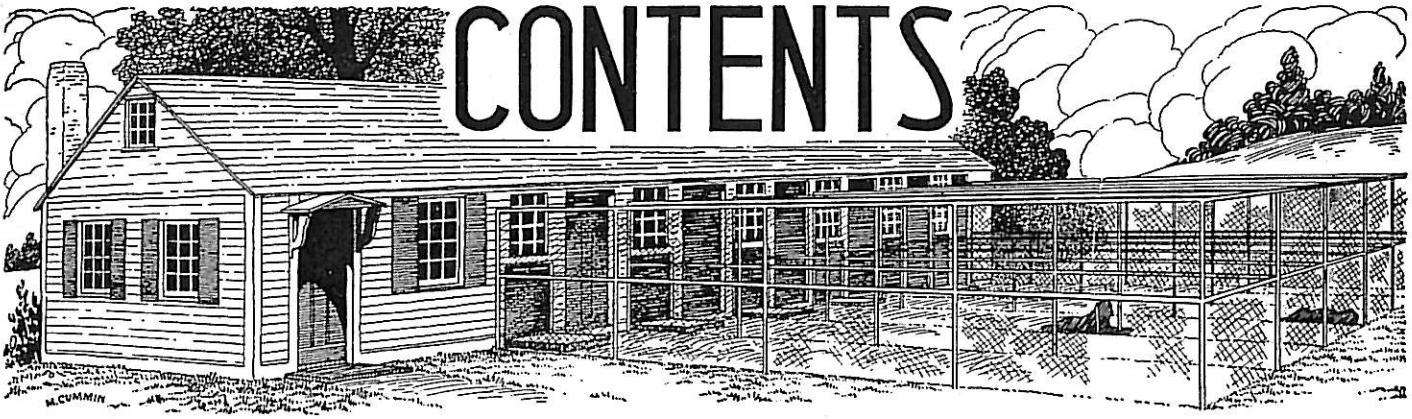
Aus den Siegern der einzelnen regulären Klassen wurde der beste Rüde (Winners Dog/WD) und die beste Hündin (Winners Bitch/WB) bestimmt. Es waren dies: Heartlight's Stand By Me (WD) und Pike's Krumm Elizabeth Oksana (WB). Entsprechend dem Reglement des American Kennel Club traten diese beiden dann zum Abschluss und Höhepunkt der Ausstellung in der sogenannten "Best of Breed Competition" gegen jene 89 Hunde (49 Rüden, 40 Hündinnen) an, die bereits den Titel "American Champion" errungen hatten. Aus dieser Konkurrenz, die an die Konzentration der Hunde, der Handler und der Richterin höchste Anforderungen stellte, wurden schliesslich der schönste Hund der Rasse (Best of Breed/BOB), der schönste Hund des anderen Geschlechts (Best of Opposite Sex/BOS) und der Sieger im Vergleich zwischen Winners Dog und Winners Bitch (Best of Winners/BOW) bestimmt. Weitere sieben Hunde wurden von der Richterin als plazierungswürdig angesehen und erhielten eine Sonder-Auszeichnung (Award of Merit).

Die Verwendung von Ködern zur Erzeugung von Aufmerksamkeit und Körperspannung mochte aus europäischer Sicht fremd erscheinen, ist aber einfach Ausdruck einer andersartigen Ausstellungskultur.

Bleibt zu erwähnen, dass es für die Erstplazierten aller Klassen attraktive Preise gab, dass natürlich ein Profi-Team die gesamte Veranstaltung auf Video aufnahm und dass selbstverständlich eine Berufsfotografin Fotos aller plazierten Hunde und ihrer Vorführer und/oder Besitzer zusammen mit der Richterin und der Ausstellungsleiterin machte.
Und das sind die Namen der Sieger der diesjährigen "National Specialty" des Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America:
Best of Breed: CH Nashem's Taylor Maid (Hündin)
Best of Opposite Sex: CH De-Li's Foregone Conclusion (Rüde)
Best of Winners: Heartlight's Stand By Me (Rüde)

Das Auftreten im Ring war gekennzeichnet durch äusserste Ruhe, Konzentration, Disziplin und Präzision. Jeder der Aussteller demonstrierte tadellose äussere Erscheinung und perfektes "Handling". Angenehm auffallend: Obwohl zahlreiche Hunde auf engstem Raum zusammen waren, zeigten alle vorbildliches Ringverhalten. Es gab kein Zerren und kein Sträuben, kein Zähnefletschen und kein Knurren, und natürlich keinerlei Probleme bei der Zahnkontrolle. Jeder Hund zeigte sich in Stand und Bewegung optimal. Kein einziger fiel in den Passgang. Besonders bemerkenswert: ein mit Klebeband auf dem Boden markiertes Rechteck von etwa 120 x 80 cm, innerhalb dessen die Hunde zur Einzelbegutachtung exakt in der richtigen Ausstellungspositur aufgestellt werden mussten. Die weitverbreitete Verwendung von Ködern zur Erzeugung von Aufmerksamkeit und Körperspannung mochte aus europäischer Sicht fremd erscheinen, ist aber einfach – wie so vieles andere auch – Ausdruck einer andersartigen Ausstellungskultur, die es zu respektieren gilt.

Nur eine von zahllosen kunsthandwerklichen Ausdrucksformen der Liebe zum Berner Sennenhund.



CONTENTS

Volume 52
Number 6

LOUIS DE CASANOVA, Editor

JUNE
1935

COVER DESIGN
Ch. Flora v Biebrich . . . . . Photograph

ADVERTISERS' INDEX 131

MILLIONTH DOG . . . . . Frontispiece

WARRENDANE HAS FOUND WHY THE GREAT DANE IS SUCH A GRAND DOG, By Arthur Frederick Jones 5

DOG BREEDS OF THE WORLD
By Freeman Lloyd 10

HERE IS THE CORRECT WAY TO FEED YOUR PUPPIES
By Leon F. Whitney 15

THE BERNESE IS A LOYAL DOG OF THE SWISS ALPS
By Mrs. L. Egg-Leach 18

SHOULD YOU GO TO AMHERST YOU WILL MEET THESE DOGS
By Walter A. Dyer 21

NEW CHAMPIONS OF A.K.C. RECORD 23

THIS MAY HELP YOU SELL DOGS
By H. R. Simpson 24

WHERE MEMBERS GATHER (Department) See Index Page 29

THE JUDGES HAVE SPOKEN (Department) 42

AN OPEN FORUM ON DOGS (Department) See Index Page 49

DOGS IN THE FIELD 51

HOW TO KEEP YOUR DOG WELL (Department)
By Edwin R. Blamey, M.R.C.V.S. 52

OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB . . . 54

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY AND TREASURER 56

LICENSED JUDGES 57

LICENSED SUPERINTENDENTS 57

OFFICIAL DOG SHOW DATES 60

SHOW AWARDS CORRECTED AND ADOPTED 61

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PUBLISHED Monthly by THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB, INC., at 221 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y., U. S. A. Terms $4.00 a year; single copies, 50 cents. Canadian postage, $1.00. Foreign postage, $1.00 a year. In making remittance follow rules on pages under caption of "Office of the Secretary-Treasurer." Unless specifically stated, articles and pictures in this magazine are not copyrighted. To further the interest of dogs, the uncopyrighted articles may be reprinted at any time. Credit requested. Address The American Kennel Club, Inc., 221 Fourth Ave., New York City.

The Bernese Is A Loyal Dog Of The Swiss Alps

By MRS. L. EGG-LEACH

Questa vom Sumiswald is an excellent specimen of the Bernese dog. She is exceedingly fond of children, as are all members of the breed

THERE are four species of Swiss mountain dogs, or "Sennenhunde," as they are called in Switzerland. They are: the Appenzeller Sennenhunde from the Canton of Appenzell, the smallest of the four species; the Entlibucher Sennenhunde, from Entlibuch in the Canton of Lucerne; the Grosse Schweizer Sennenhunde—large Swiss—the largest, and the draught-dogs of Switzerland; and the Berner Sennenhunde, the only long-coated one, and the acknowledged aristocrat of them all.

All are tricolor, black, white, tan. But in this breed, the light tan markings are never encouraged — they can best be described as a rich, russet-brown.

At one time, there were many with whole white collars and fore-legs. But of late years, the fanciers have preferred more black, and the white is now confined to chest, feet, tip of tail, and in most cases, to a white stripe, or blaze up the foreface.

It is the Bernese, the long-coated species, which I have chosen for my subject. It may not seem quite fair to the fanciers of the other three species, but it is the one with which I am most familiar, having always had the good fortune to have some in my near neighborhood, which I could watch and study individually.

I am not a fancier of this breed, but I have watched it closely, without taking any active part, for very many years, and my admiration has never waned.

These mountain dogs, although a very old Swiss breed, do not share the world-wide fame of their near relatives, the St. Bernards, from the Hospice of the Great St. Bernard. In fact, until a few years before the great war, they even were not very well known in their own country, Switzerland. For a great many years, they seemed to have been quite forgotten. The old people in the Canton of Berne knew them well, but in time, they were seldom seen.

THE three other species were used to herd the cattle on the Alps. But the Bernese species, of which I am writing, belonged mostly to the basket weavers in and around the Canton of Berne. These dogs were used to draw the small wagons, filled with baskets, to the market place, in Berne.

NEVERTHELESS, they were passed by unnoticed for many years. Their brave deeds were never brought to the notice of the public, at home or abroad. Still these dogs did their duty, year in and year out, often under the greatest hardships, and without the kindly and loving care that are bestowed on the St. Bernards by the monks at the Hospice.

Their masters—the basket weavers —were reared in a hard school. Work and poverty was often their lot. They lived miles from anywhere, in some lonely mountain valley or hamlet, and their only recreation was the long tramp, beside their wagons, on market-day.

Theirs was no easy life, and the dogs shared it.

It was in the market place that the dogs were noticed. One man related he remembered his parents speaking about the dogs. Yet it was a long time before they were brought out of exile. No one really cared about them, and they were often crossed with all sorts of breeds, often choosing their own mates, until the time came when they were almost an extinct breed.

Then it was, in the year 1892, that this one man went in search of some good specimen.

I will mention no names, as there are many that may not be left out, and names would convey nothing to my readers. Suffice it to say, that, in a short time, others followed his good example, and a few good specimens were unearthed to try and build up a

breed that had been sadly neglected.

Why such lovely dogs should have remained unnoticed for so long a time, no one seems to know. Some put this down to the craze for foreign breeds, especially British ones. Personally, I do not think this could make any difference. These dogs were simply passed by.

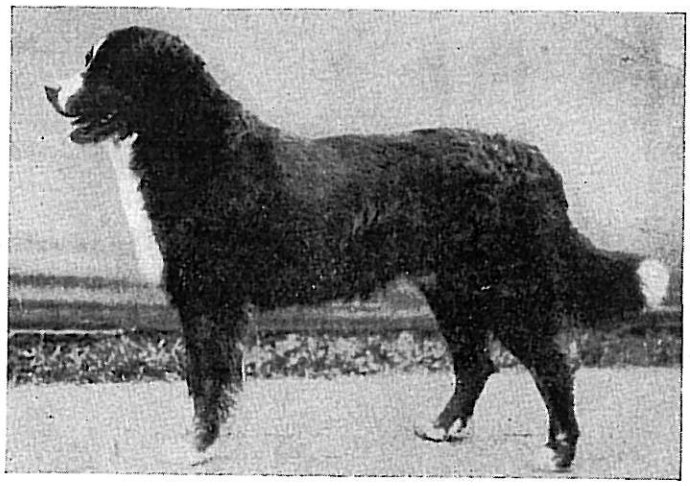
IT is all very mysterious when you consider the age of the breed. Some declare that the dog can be traced back as far as the Romans. Others say it originated from the dogs of Tibet. No one seemed to have seen their value in the past, as a pure-bred, national breed.

Let me relate how and when I first made the acquaintance of these Bernese dogs, many years ago, before they were brought to the notice of the public and before their club was formed. My interest in them at first was purely a sentimental one. I had only just arrived in Switzerland, where I have resided now for more than 30 years.

One day, I saw from afar, what I thought was a tricolor collie, harnessed to a small wagon, filled with milk-cans, taking the milk from house to house. I had read much about sled-dogs and had seen many photographs of them, but I had never seen a dog in harness before; above all, one of my lifelong favorites. It was too much for me. A dog was a companion and friend to me, not something to be used as a beast of burden.

I think I lost my head at the time. I forgot, for the moment that I was in a strange land, and that strange lands had strange customs, I had still much to learn. Not only was my interest awakened, but my indignation was aroused at such a sight. When the dog came nearer, I saw that it was a totally different breed. But to me it was a four-footed friend. I had never read nor heard of this breed before, and my interest soon developed into admiration.

The dog was well cared for, and his master seemed kind to him. Certainly the master did not deserve the bitter reproaches I gave him. I am thankful to this day that he could not understand the few words I could—or thought I could—speak of his language, for they were not complimentary at all. I have since learned much about the draught-dogs, and am fully convinced that they are happier at work than when idle.



The Bernese does not make friends easily with strangers. Here is Ajax vom Buchegg-berg, a dog that is very well known

THE man told me later on that he was from the Canton of Berne, and his dog was a "Dürbächler," the name by which they were then known.

Since I have learned more about the breed, I now know that this was not a well-bred specimen. It was many years after that, before I saw a really good dog.

The Bernese species are seldom to be seen in harness now. They soon found favor with the richer classes, and are valued very much as house-dogs and companions, especially where there are children.

They are passionately fond of children. It is no unusual sight to see them pulling along a wagon full of children, for the fun of the thing.

As I am writing, I can see one of my neighbor's Bernese dogs, pulling some children along the road in a sled. He has no harness on. The children have attached a piece of rope to his collar, and he is rushing up and down the road, barking for all he is worth.

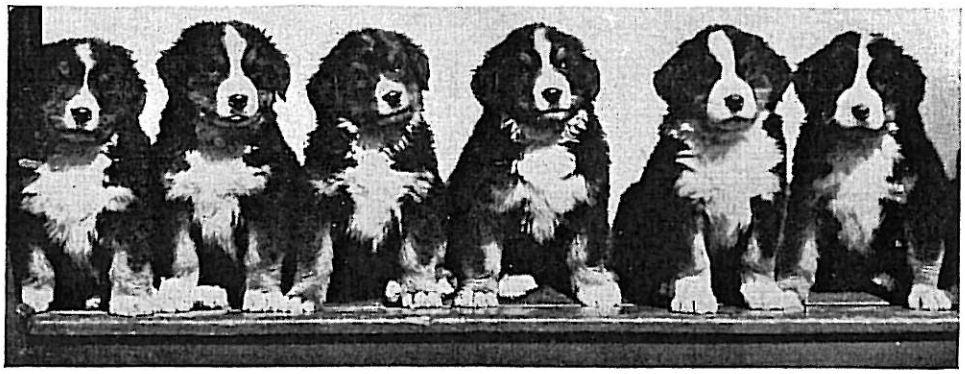
And one, belonging to another neighbor, I can see rolling in the snow with the children, letting them snowball him to their hearts' content. It is a pretty sight.

Love of children, faithfulness to their master and his family seem to be very strongly developed in this breed, there is no treachery in their nature. Their owners do not like to see them leading a lazy life. One authority on Swiss breeds once said of them, as well as of the St. Bernards: "they are trained when born."

One would really think there was some truth in this statement, for they love work of any sort.

THEY were used to hardships in the old days, and I do not think they will ever lose their working qualities. They can be trained to anything within reason.

Of the four species of the Swiss mountain dogs, the long-coated ones are the aristocrats



Bernese puppies are adorable. They soon grow into excellent house dogs and splendid companions

During the great war, they were trained, by the Red Cross, in Germany. One dog was sent from Switzerland to be trained for that work. The result was splendid, and proved their ability for such work, in time of war.

Within the last few years, they have made great strides, both in quality and quantity. I think I may say that some of the champions of to-day are as perfect as they can be bred.

I will now relate how the Bernese species of Swiss mountain dogs were brought to the fore, and saved from becoming an extinct breed.

It was not an easy task these Swiss patriots set themselves when they first tried to find some pure-bred specimens for the foundation of their breeding stock. Outside of the Canton of Berne, there were few, if any, that could answer this purpose.

The first was unearthed, as I mentioned before, in 1892, at a place called Dürbach, in the Canton of Berne. For many years they were called "Dürbächler" after this place.

Then other pioneers set to work, determined to save what was left. Soon more breeding stock was found, and the breeding of the pure-bred Dürbächler began in earnest.

IN 1907, a club was formed, called the Dürbächler Club. About a year later, on finding these dogs all over the Canton, the pioneers decided to change their name to "Berner Sennenhunde," the name they are now known by. The old name was dropped, except in some cases where the owners are loathe to drop it altogether, and the club was renamed the Berner Sennenhund Club.

From then on, the breed never looked back. The pioneers worked hard to achieve what they had determined to do. Soon the dogs were to be seen all over the country, and the number of exhibits at the Swiss shows increased from year to year. It took many years before the pioneers succeeded.

BUT they did not give in. And in the end, they had the satisfaction of having good results. Faults were rapidly bred out, and the public began to admire them. They were now an established national Swiss breed, of which the country is proud.

A year or two ago, they were mentioned in the doggy press in England. But the quarantine law of that country has, up to the present time, spoilt all efforts to get some imported into the British Isles.

The quarantine kennels are very expensive, and no one cares to take the plunge with a new breed.

Rea vom Durrbach is another outstanding specimen of the Bernese dog, a breed still natural and unfaked

I have been told that one or more have been exported to America, but I do not know to which part of that continent.

STILL I believe they have not yet been brought to the notice of the American public, neither have they been recognized by the American Kennel Club.

At the special shows, held for Swiss breeds from time to time, in Switzerland, some splendid specimens are to be seen. It is here the novice can learn much by watching the placings of the best dogs and bitches. Their judges are mostly very thorough with the Swiss breeds, and carefully overhaul the exhibits. A cow-hocked and badly balanced dog has no chance with them, and movement is one of their greatest "fads" if I may call it so. It is time well spent to watch them sorting out the weedy specimens.

Faking is not done, and this breed has not been ruined by too drastic inbreeding. Neither is there any question of changing their type to suit some whim, which has so often spelt disaster.

The Bernese dogs are still what nature meant them to be; unfaked, useful and good all around dogs. When well cared for, a dog anyone can be proud of.

If my readers will kindly look at the photographs of Ajax vom Buchegg-berg and Rea vom Dürrbach they will see one of the best braces in the country. Ajax is a well-known stud-dog, and in great demand for good bitches.

If they picture to themselves a well-balanced dog, standing from 25 to 27 inches at shoulder, bitches up to 25 inches; with jet black, silky, and slightly wavy coat of medium length; white markings on chest, feet, tip of tail, and on foreface; rich russet-brown markings distributed over muzzle, thighs, under body, and tail; with a brown spot over each eye, which may never be missing; dark brown eyes, which seem to invite trust; ears V-shaped and set on high, hanging close to head; flat, broad, well-developed skull; medium stop and short, broad muzzle; level mouth; long bushy tail or brush, carried low, slight upward swirl permissible; compact, not

(*Continued on page* 131)

Helga should have the opportunity to raise a family. Consequently, because of her friendship with the Warrens, the bitch was sent to Warrendane, and bred to Ch. Jamas. And it is at Warrendane that Helga will whelp her litter. Miss Keller frequently visits the Warrens to see her favorite dog, and fondle some of the puppies there.

Time alone will tell the future of the Warrendane Kennels, but, after viewing the splendid manner in which Mr. and Mrs. Warren are conducting one of the finest hobbies in the world, it is not difficult to predict that this kennel will accomplish worthwhile results in the near future, and will stand for many years as one of our finest establishments.

THE BERNESE IS A LOYAL DOG OF THE SWISS ALPS

(*Continued from page 20*)

too long body; straight, muscular fore-legs and well-developed stifles; and an all around sound, robust dog. They will have formed a picture of a really good specimen of the Bernese species of Swiss mountain dogs.

They are very active, alert dogs. Not boisterous in a rough way. Also not quarrelsome, unless attacked, and then they know how to take care of themselves. They are very hardy. An outside kennel, free from draughts; filled with good straw in winter; good, wholesome, doggy food; and a few minutes grooming daily are all they need to keep them in the pink of condition.

They are extremely faithful; a real one man's dog. They do not make friends with strangers. It is always hard for them to get used to a new home, and for that reason they should be bought young. Outside of their master's domains they have no interests; in fact, this trait has often been their undoing. To show what I mean, I will relate something which happened not so very long ago:

A neighbor bought one of these dogs as a puppy, and as the dog grew older, he tired of him for some reason unknown. He then sold the dog, when about 2 years old, to a good home, some miles away.

After a few days, the dog was to be seen, lying out in the road in front of his old home. He was returned to his new owner again and again. But he always returned. He never went inside his old home, because a rival of his own breed had taken his place.

He would follow the children to and from school, as he had done in the old days, but they were forbidden to encourage him. In despair, they took to chasing him away, even stoning him, but he stuck to his post in front of the gate. Neighbors fed him out of pity, but he ate scarcely enough to keep him alive, until one day, lying in front of his old home, he was run over and died in the arms of his old master.

The man told me that he would never forget that dying look. No reproach, only a deep love and adoration for the only master he had ever acknowledged.

There is one of these dogs on each side of my house. We are friends, as far as they make friends, a friendly wag of their tails. Here our friendship ends. If I put out my hand to touch them, they walk away. I have never touched them since they were puppies, and they are old dogs now.

I think this is a lovely trait in any breed, and I have never noticed a bad one in these dogs.

The best recommendation for any breed is that of the non-fancier. We are all too apt to be blind to the faults of our favorite breeds, but not so with the faults of others. I only hope I have done these dogs the justice they deserve. I have tried to give you my opinion of the breed, and that opinion has never altered in all these years.

I am sure if some of the American citizens, who visit Switzerland, could see the best strains, the Bernese species of Swiss mountain dogs would soon take its place at the side of the St. Bernards in America. The dog well deserves it.

I would never advise anyone to buy haphazard. As in all breeds, there are good and bad strains. In the best strains the faults have been, for the most part, well bred out. Only two remain which give the breeders some trouble. They are: too gaily carried tails and curly coats. But in some strains, even this has disappeared. The coat must be wavy, but it should never curl.

Beside the Berner Sennehund Club there is an Association for Swiss breeds, called the Zuchtverband. This Association guards the interests of all Swiss breeds and their breeders, helping them with breeding and other problems.

The Swiss breeders have also not been spoilt, and their prices are not fancy ones.

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BEAGLES, page 128.
BLOODHOUNDS, page 128.
BOARDING, pages 128, 129, 132, 140, 141, 144, 145, 146.
BOOKS, page 128.
BOSTON TERRIERS, pages 128, 136.
BOXERS, page 136.
BULLDOGS, pages 128, 137.
BULLTERRIERS, pages 128, 145.
CHOW CHOWS, pages 128, 136.
CLASSIFIED ADVTS, pages 128, 129.
COLLIES, page 128.
CUSTOM BROKERS, page 146.
DACHSHUNDE, pages 128, 142, 143.
DALMATIANS, pages 128, 136.
DOG PRODUCTS, First Inside Cover, pages 1, 2, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 141, 143, 145, 146, Back Inside Cover, Back Outside Cover.
FENCING, page 139.
FOXTERRIERS, pages 128, 129, 145.
FRENCH BULLDOGS, page 136.
GERMAN SHEPHERD DOGS, pages 128, 135.
GREAT DANES, pages 134, 135.
HANDLERS, pages 129, 132, 144, 145, 146.
HOTELS FOR DOGS, page 144.
HOUSEBREAKING, page 128.
IMPORTERS, page 146.
INSURANCE, pages 132, 146.
IRISH TERRIERS, pages 128, 144.
KENNEL RECORD BOOKS, page 144.
KENNEL RUNS, page 139.
KERRY BLUE TERRIERS, pages, 128, 144, 145.
LIVE STOCK SPECIALISTS, pages, 146.
NEWFOUNDLANDS, page 129.
NORWEGIAN ELKHOUNDS, pages 129, 134.
OLD ENGLISH SHEEPDOGS, page 134.
PEKINGESE, pages 128, 139.
PHOTOGRAPHERS, page 128.
PINSCHERS (DOBERMAN), page 128.
PINSCHERS MINIATURE, page 129.
PLUCKING KNIVES, page 138.
POINTERS, pages 142, 143.
POMERANIANS, page 139.
POODLES, page 137.
PUBLISHERS, page 128.
RETRIEVERS (LABRADOR), pages 128, 129, 142.
ST. BERNARDS, page 128.
SAMOYEDES, pages 128, 134.
SCHIPPERKES, pages 129, 137.
SCHNAUZERS, pages 128, 129, 144.
SCOTTISH TERRIERS, pages 128, 129, 144.
SCRAP BOOKS, page 137.
SEALYHAM TERRIERS, page 145.
SETTERS (ENGLISH), pages 128, 142, 143.
SETTERS (IRISH), pages 128, 142.
SHIPPING, page 146.
SHOWS, pages 130, 133, 138.
SPANIELS (COCKER), pages 128, 129, 140, 141.
SPANIELS (ENGLISH SPRINGER), pages 128, 140.
STRIPPING COMBS, page 138.
TOY MANCHESTERS, page 129.
TRAINING, pages 128, 140, 141, 146.
WELSH TERRIERS, page 145.
WEST HIGHLAND WHITE TERRIERS, page 145.
YORKSHIRE TERRIERS, page 128.

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I have never heard of a fancy price being charged for a Swiss breed yet.

I hope the time will come when the Bernese mountain dogs may be called "a coming breed" on the other side of the Atlantic.

SHOULD YOU GO TO AMHERST YOU WILL MEET THESE DOGS

(*Continued from page 22*)

might I call it?) is 'Spot,' though I attribute that to my master's color blindness, since I have myriad spots. However, the name means little because, as you know, I'll come eagerly to anyone who calls me anything.

"You suggest that I am too grown up for the High School, and I thank you for such a high compliment, but, alas, that is not the reason I shun that institution and seem to prefer the College, but my master has distinctly told me to keep away. In fact, he tells me to 'stay home' every day, but I fool him as soon as he disappears around the corner. I crave excitement the same as any two-year-old youngster does, so what does my master think by telling me to sit on the front porch all day? Oh, well, I go off and have my fun and get back by mid-afternoon, so he never knows the difference—excepting one time when he found me by the College library and seemed quite disgusted by my peregrination. (Isn't that some word for a dog? You see, I associate with Mr. Webster, too.)

"One more thing I might add, Mr. Dyer, is that I think I'm a sort of English setter, not a spaniel, though as regards my ancestry I'm not the least bit fussy—the less said about it the better.

"I expect to get back to 'work' again, going my daily rounds.

"Doggily yours,

"Spot Foth."

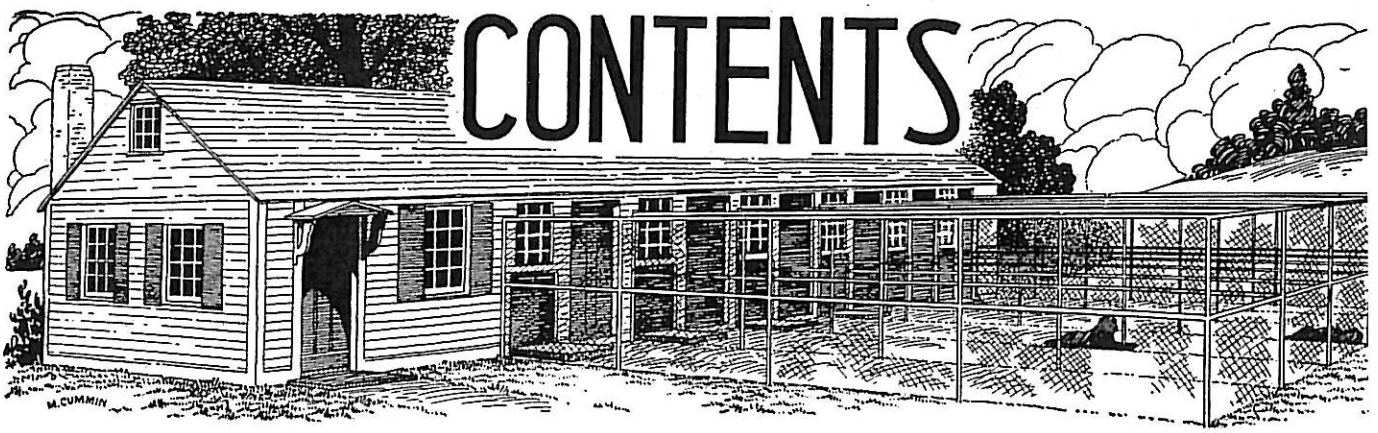
Spot Foth may not have written that letter. But if you love dogs as I do, you will not worry regarding a little thing like that. There was his name, and that is enough for me.

HERE IS THE CORRECT WAY TO FEED YOUR PUPPIES

(*Continued from page 17*)

If it is borne in mind that a medicine dropper, when three-quarters full, holds about a gram, and that an ounce contains 28 grams, it is a simple matter to know the proper amount to feed.

Always remember that the puppy grows on the solids in the food. Water is not to be considered in our calculations. Water is essential to life and growth, but that is taken for granted. Actual accretions in growth come from the food solids. For that reason, which cannot be too often repeated, if milk is diluted more than the composition



CONTENTS

Volume 53
Number 4

APRIL
1936

LOUIS DE CASANOVA, Editor

COVER DESIGN
Ch. Tally Ho Copper Penny . . . . . Photograph

ADVERTISERS' INDEX 4

FRONTISPIECE—Ch. Star Dust of Willow Run 6

IS IT THE NOSE OF A DOG THAT IS HIS TRUE GUIDE?
By Henry Charles Suter 7

MOOSE HUNTING DOGS OF NORWAY
By J. Aarflot 10

DOGS PLAYED A MAJOR PART IN THE STORY OF THE GREAT SOUTHWEST, By Elrick B Davis 12

THE MARDORMERE KENNELS INSISTS ITS COCKERS BE BOTH "QUICK AND MERRY." By Arthur Frederick Jones 15

DOG BREEDS OF THE WORLD
By Freeman Lloyd 19

WHY COLLARS WERE WORN BY EARLY SWISS DOGS
By Mrs. L. Egg-Leach 23

WHEN BOSTON NAMED A GREYHOUND
By Arthur Frederick Jones 25

BEST AMERICAN-BREDS OF 1935
By John Ross Harkness 29

CHAMPIONS OF A.K.C. RECORD 30

WHERE MEMBERS GATHER (Department) See Index Page 31

AN OPEN FORUM ON DOGS (Department) See Index Page 51

THE JUDGES HAVE SPOKEN (Department) 52

DOGS IN THE FIELD 56

HOW TO KEEP YOUR DOG WELL (Department)
By Edwin R. Blamey, M.R.C.V.S. 57

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES 59

OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB . . . 60

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY AND TREASURER . . . 62

LICENSED JUDGES 62

LICENSED SUPERINTENDENTS 62

OFFICIAL DOG SHOW DATES 65

SHOW AWARDS CORRECTED AND ADOPTED 66

Arthur Frederick Jones, Assistant Editor
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PUBLISHED Monthly by THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB, INC., at 221 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y., U. S. A. Terms $4.00 a year; single copies, 50 cents. Canadian postage, $1.00. Foreign postage, $1.00 a year. In making remittance follow rules on pages under caption of "Office of the Secretary-Treasurer." Unless specifically stated, articles and pictures in this magazine are not copyrighted. To further the interest of dogs, the uncopyrighted articles may be reprinted at any time. Credit requested. Address The American Kennel Club, Inc., 221 Fourth Ave., New York City.

Why Collars Were Worn By Early Swiss Dogs

By MRS. L. EGG-LEACH

I THINK it is safe to say that every country in the world has its national dog. Of course, many are not "fancied," but in the main, they are loyal, intelligent animals, and each breed goes to prove that the dog is loved by all mankind. But I wonder if there are many countries in the world that have characteristic dog collars, so interesting and of so much historic value that they are preserved in national museums for future generations to study, if not to admire?

It is quite possible that Switzerland is the only country that has a collection of dog collars. True, the collection is small. Still the ten collars that may be seen in the Swiss National Museum in Zuerich are most interesting, and one that might well be studied by all dog lovers who are fortunate enough to visit this busy, industrial Swiss city, famous for its silk manufactures.

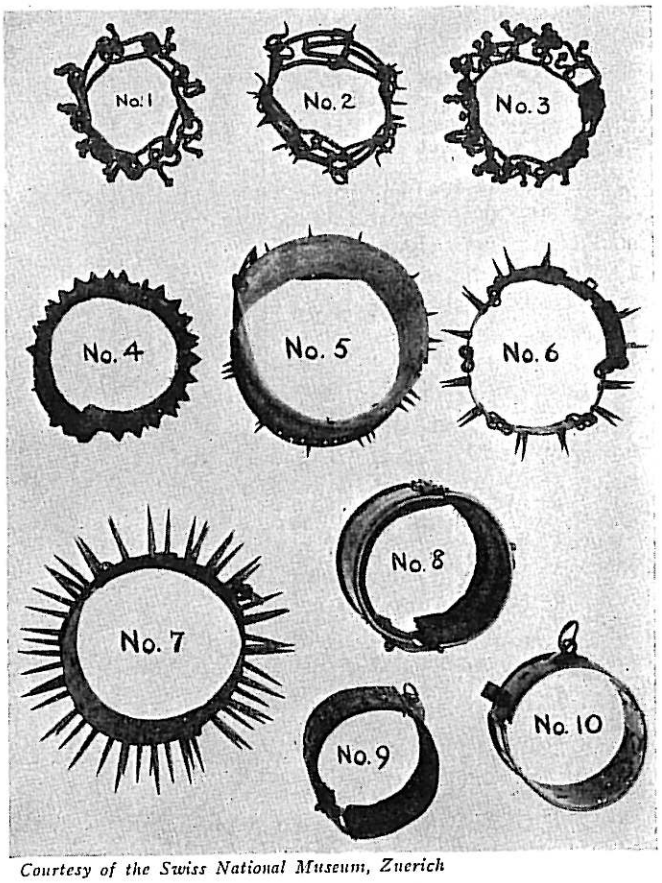
These dog collars belong to a period when Switzerland was not the peaceful and highly cultivated country that we know today; to a time when the land was in some parts infested by wild animals, such as bears, wild boars, and wolves. Incidentally, the last named animals were not exterminated until the beginning of the 18th Century.

In those "good, old days"—if they really were good—it often happened that domesticated dogs were attacked by these wild animals; in fact, sometimes they were attacked by other dogs. And as the domesticated dogs were of great value, it was necessary to protect their throats from the sharp teeth of their opponents. So the collars were "invented"—I like the word, don't you?—and they went a long way towards saving the lives of the domesticated animals.

Like many a casual observer, I had often visited the Zuerich museum, but not knowing of the existence of these collars, had passed them by unnoticed. It was not until I had read a story by Dr. La Roche, written in a book to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Swiss Kennel Club (Schweizerische Kynologische Gesellschaft), that I knew there was such an exhibit there.

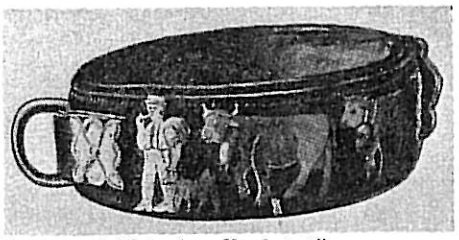
At that time, Dr. La Roche was eager to find some facts to prove the existence of the so-called war dogs of his forefathers. Little is known of these dogs except that they were mentioned by several historians. It is believed that they were used by the early Swiss mountaineers to help protect the country from invasion, and to free the Swiss from the tyranny of the House of Austria. There is nothing definite to be found, however, to prove that these war dogs ever existed; in fact, there are many who say they are a myth.

In the course of his search, Dr. La Roche had visited the museum to ascertain if the collars had ever been used by war-dogs. Dr. Gessler, the historian of the museum, informed Dr. La Roche that the collars had not been used by these dogs, but that they belonged to a somewhat later period. The majority had been used on the watch and hunting dogs of the early part of the 18th Century.



Courtesy of the Swiss National Museum, Zuerich

I determined to see the collars, and to gather the information available. Dr. K. Frei, vice-director of the museum, offered to be my escort; and he was, indeed, a great help. He not only showed me the collars and gave me all the information I desired, but also obtained the original photographs, which are here reproduced.



Courtesy of "Schweizer Hundesport"

Here is the national collar of the canton Appenzell. It is only worn by the Appenzeller Sennenhunde

THE dog-collars which may be seen grouped together at the top of this page, hang in a long glass case, on the left hand wall of the corridor leading to the armory. They are surrounded by many interesting hunting implements, which probably belong to the same historical period.

When I first saw these collars I was amazed! Not by the materials from which they are made, but by their crude, yet practicable, designs. One cannot

doubt but that they fitted their purpose admirably.

Several are nothing more than heavy wire, twisted and turned to form a collar, thickly studded with thorns and spikes. Others are made from a metal similar to cast iron but much lighter in weight. There are a few which are just broad brass bands, richly engraved with scrolls and figures, some bearing the name of the one time owner. Needless to say, these cumbersome collars would look sadly out of place on the necks of our pure-bred dogs today.

Courtesy of the Swiss National Museum, Zuerich

In this old wood carving, dated 1661, may be seen two dogs whose necks and ears are protected by spiked collars

The collars, Numbers 1, 2 and 3, were used for watchdogs on lonely farms. Often miles from their nearest neighbors, these farms were without protection other than that furnished by their dogs. At night, the dogs were entirely at the mercy of bears and wolves, which often prowled around these lonely homesteads. It can readily be seen that the collars were absolutely necessary, not only to help protect the dogs from fatal injury, but also to insure the safety of the farms.

Number 4 is heavier and of a less elaborate make. Dr. La Roche believes that this type of collar was used on the watchdogs which were chained in the courtyards of the castles. He states in his story, that a similar collar, bearing the dates "15th-16th Century," is to be found in the museum at Basle.

Numbers 6 and 7 can be seen on the old wood carving, dated 1661, that appears on this page. In the carving, some dogs are shown attacking a bear, which has been wounded by the hunter. One dog, without a collar, is seen lying dead at the side of the bear; while two others, wearing collars similar to Number 7, are attacking. Notice how well their necks and closely cropped ears are protected by the spikes of the collars.

THE dogs shown in the cut are of various breeds, no doubt different crosses to obtain the most desirable characteristics for the purpose for which they were used. Some look like a cross between a greyhound and a Great Dane; somewhat heavier than the greyhound, and more lithe than the Dane. Some look like beagles. Yet it is hard to believe that any were pure-bred in those days.

THE collars, Numbers 8, 9, and 10, are different from the others. These collars were worn by the dogs belonging to the gentry of the earlier half of the 18th Century. Number 8 bears the name of a captain in the Swiss army; and Number 10, that of a colonel. The broad brass collars were worn by the dogs of the gentry when hunting wolves; the spiked ones for the bear hunt.

A most mysterious thing is that the dog of which we have all heard at some time or another—the dog which made his breed famous by his brave deeds—the life-saving St. Bernard, Barry, which belonged to the monks of the Hospice of St. Bernard, wears a collar similar to Number 2.

Courtesy of the Museum of Natural History, Berne

It is difficult to understand why the stuffed figure of the great Barry in the Museum of Natural History, Berne, should wear a spiked collar, instead of a liquor cask

SINCE this collar was worn by the watch and hunting dogs of the 18th Century, it hardly belongs on this heroic, old animal. We expect to see the proverbial leather collar, with its small cask of brandy attached so as to be within easy reach of the exhausted traveler's hand—the traveler whom the dog might unearth in the treacherous snow of the high Alps.

Perhaps Dr. La Roche was right in his surmise when he wrote:

"Probably it was to save the old dog from being attacked by the fierce dogs in the valley, on his last journey down to Berne. No matter what the reason, it is hard to understand."

Barry saved more than 40 human lives from certain death in the snow and ice, during the 12 years he was with the monks at the Hospice. When he was 12 years old, he was taken to Berne to be cared for, as long as he lived. He died in 1814, at the age of 14, and was then preserved and placed in the Museum of Natural History at Berne, in 1815.

Unfortunately, the taxidermists of that time were not as skilful as those of today. As a result, the old dog was a sorry sight. His proud, old head was bowed almost to the ground, his stifles were weak from old age and hard work. In all, he did not present the splendid figure which he really was, in his task of saving human lives from death.

In 1923, he was taken in hand by a modern taxidermist. His old coat was restored and placed over a new model. The artist did his work well. And Barry now has a place of honor in the hall of the Museum, commanding the attention of the visitor. With his head high and proud, he stands, as a fine specimen of a breed of whose brave deeds his native country is justly proud.

Another dog-collar—

(*Please turn to page* 120)

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stalk, leaving your tracker and handler behind. You get closer and closer until you are finally crawling on all fours. A glimpse of a huge brown body is seen for an instant. A careful and quick aim, not so easy when you may be dropping from fatigue and you, and the sights of your gun, heave with your panting. Your shot was true, a heavy body crashes to earth, you dash forward and see again that never-to-be-forgotten picture of your elkhound standing on his quarry, and tearing at it with snarling fury.

For this kind of work, a keen nose, courage, and a short, rugged, powerful physique are so essential in the elkhound that these attributes have come to be characteristic of the breed. Look at that tremendous chest and short back. They give the typical elkhound a blocky, almost a "cubic" appearance, and insure the necessary agility to save his life when attacked by the moose, and the endurance to follow his quarry hour after hour if necessary.

You have seen your dog tenaciously follow his quarry perhaps all day, bringing it to successive stands until, finally, he was able to hold his moose long enough for you to draw near and shoot. You are not surprised that an elkhound has been known to keep a Norwegian brown bear—very like a grizzly—at bay, single handed, for a whole day. Docile and affectionate, often rather shy and reserved about your home, your dog is completely transformed in the deep forests, with his background of thousands of years of hunting big game urging him on.

The accompanying snapshots were taken in the winter after the hunting season had ended. Our hunting season for moose in Norway is the last five days in September, i. e., during the mating season. We rarely have snow as early as that. The snapshots were taken during the winter by Mr. Bjorneby. One shows two elkhounds keeping at bay an old bull which has shed his horns.

p.120

WHY COLLARS WERE WORN BY EARLY SWISS DOGS

(*Continued from page* 24)

more modern and still in use in Switzerland, today—is the national collar of the canton Appenzell. This collar is only worn by one breed of dog, one of the four species of Swiss mountain dog, the "Appenzeller Sennenhunde" (the drover's dog). This is a dog about the size of an Eskimo sled-dog; a smooth-coated tricolor, which like its master, is full of life and fun.

The collar is made of a large brass band mounted on red felt. The brass is covered with raised figures of cattle, wearing their huge bronze bells. In the foreground is the drover, dressed in the picturesque costume of the canton; and at his heel is his dog, with its brass collar.

These figures represent the "Alpfahrt," as it is called; the time when the cattle are rounded up from the various villages of the canton, and given to the drover and his dog to be

p.121

taken into the Alps for the few summer months. During their exile, the drover and his dog are inseparable. They seldom see another living thing except their cattle, which they must tend and protect night and day.

During the festival, the inhabitants of the canton gather together in gala dress to wish them "God speed." They are sent off with blessings, and received back with thanksgiving. It is a sight once seen that will not be forgotten. The singing "Yodel," the melodious tingle of the cow bells and musical instruments, the lowing of the cattle, and the barking of dogs, can be heard for miles.

While, at present, this collar is not part of the collection at the museum, it will, probably, some day, take its place beside those of earlier periods. Its history, and that of the others, will be handed down from generation to generation; giving foundation to the fact that the dog has always been a fine companion, a great helper, and a faithful protector of his master.

THE MARDORMERE KENNELS INSIST ITS COCKERS BE BOTH "QUICK AND MERRY"

(*Continued from page* 18)

The room is about 12 x 15 feet. The walls are of knotted pine, and this combines with the unfinished beams to give a definitely old effect. At one side is an open fireplace. Facing the fire is a long couch. An antique batter holder is used for a coffee table, and chairs, benches, a butter tub, a desk, and a cabinet—all more than a century old —find appropriate, if sometimes different, modern usage.

The cabinet contains an unusual collection of pottery dogs, including some of the finest examples of Liverpool, Bennington, and Staffordshire, and some Magelica plates with dogs on them. Everything decorative in the room is related in some manner to dogs. The electric light fixtures bear the silhouette of Ch. My Own Right of Way.

The Mardormere hospital is a small building, 12 x 8 feet, but it is completely equipped to hold a dozen dogs. It has its own heating unit. This hospital is located some 50 feet from the main kennel, and it has its own runs, double-fenced. While this little building has found no serious use for sick dogs, it is often convenient for isolating show dogs, just returned from the circuit of indoor shows, from which,

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The Bernese Mountain Dog

By R. Caldwell

Two thousand years ago Roman legions streamed over the Alps and poured into Switzerland. With them as watchdogs, burden carriers and perhaps companions, came large black and tan dogs with white markings. This breed, now called the Bernese Mountain Dog, is one of the oldest pure breeds known. Their descendants are to be met in Switzerland to this day, where they were formerly used chiefly as draught animals pulling milk carts, and carts owned by weavers piled high with bundles of textiles. Nowadays they arc kept on farms, where they are valuable for herding cattle. And they have become cherished household pets, for they are excellent watchdogs and may safely be left with children.

Yet the Bernese has been somewhat crowd-ed out by the Swiss national breed-the St. Bernard. Popular until about 1850, the Bernese gradually sank out of sight. In 1891 a local dog fancier vainly tried to find a good example of the breed. Greatly shocked, he set about remedying this condition, and with such good results that in 1907 a specialty club was formed. However, the Bernese are not prolific breeders and seem little known outside of their own country, although a few have gone to Holland, England and Australia.

According to the records of the Department of Agriculture, the only importer of Bernese dogs into the United States is Glen Shadow of Ruston, la. It is difficult to understand why this should be so, for the Bernese is certainly an exceptionally handsome animal, and fully as deserving of popular favor as any other European breed. The first Bernese dogs came over in 1936, when Mr. Shadow brought in Felix and Fridy, a bitch with a very fine show record abroad. Exhibited in the International Dog Show held as Basle, Switzerland, in 1935, Fridy took best of breed and best of her sex. In addition, she was awarded an "International Beauty Certificate", setting her apart as one of the best dogs in Europe.

Mr. Shadow says of these dogs: "They arc very kind by nature, but are very courageous and ready to stand their ground if imposed upon. They are also ready to protect their master. Some would become vicious if abused or handled roughly frequently. They are very undemanding and do not take exception to minor unkindness's, or to average dogs' petty growls. But when they do attempt to defend themselves, or their master, they are certainly well qualified in every respect to hold their own."

No doubt Mr. Shadow speaks with feeling, as he owes his life to two of his Bernese dogs - Felix and Frances. When he was attacked and badly mauled by an infuriated buck, these dogs came to the rescue. Each grabbed one of the deer's legs and took him off their master; the deer then broke away from them and swam a lake with Felix and Frances hot at his heels. It was a 350-pound buck with ten points, and the dogs rendered the best aid possible, but it was a very close call for their owner. However, the Bernese is not a hunting dog, for he has always been considered as a farm and general utility breed. He might 6e trained, Mr. Shadow thinks, but he would not, of course, have the speed and tracking ability of a hound, since he has been bred rather for ruggedness and stamina. The bitch Frances, above mentioned is a daughter of Fridy, the international prize winner, whom she closely resembles.

The Bernese is in no sense a made breed, or a composite one, since he has never so far as is known been crossed with any other. He is smaller than the St. Bernard, and never shows the weakness of back and slackness of loin occasionally found in larger breeds. His appearance is very pleasing, partly due to the peculiar markings which are considered most important. The body color is a deep glossy black with russet brown marks on all legs, and a tan or bright russet spot over each eye. The chest is white, the marking rays out like a cross, while the brawn marks on the forelegs must

Friday, the first Bernese Mountain puppy whelped in the United States. Owned and bred by Glen L. Shadow, Ruston, La.

invariably come between the black and white colorings. The feet should be white, as well as the tip of the tail, which may be carried either low or gayly, but never curled tightly over the back. Its underside is frequently yellow. There is a white blaze on the face, and the eyes are brown with an intelligent and fiery expression. Light and staring eyes are taboo. Tan spots above the eyes add greatly to the expressiveness of the Benese's open and pleasing countenance.

Great stress is laid on clearness of tone in the markings; that is, the white must be pure and not flecked or ticked with color, the black must be uniform and glossy, and the brown a rich deep russet, or mellow golden tan. While the markings must be clearly defined, it is not desired to breed all dogs with markings of uniform size and shape, as it is felt this would detract from individuality. Although white feet are considered desirable, white legs are not, and will in fact disqualify a dog. There used to be solid yellow animals, but these were bred out and have not been seen since before the first World War. The coat is wavy with a natural silken sheen, but it must never be curly or crinkly. It is moderately long.

The skull is flat, with a well-defined stop and strong muzzle. While the head slightly resembles a Newfoundland's, it mutt under no circumstances be heavy or coarse; neither, on the other hand, may the muzzle be narrow and fine. The ears are short, V-shaped but not too pointed, and are set on high. When the dog is alert the ears are brought forward a little, otherwise they hang close to the head.

A compact, well-ribbed-up and relatively short body is characteristic. It should never be long, slender and setter-like. The chest is broad, insuring good wind and pulling ability, the brisket is deep. Thighs are well developed, round and compact, while the forelegs must be perfectly straight, and the feet round and neat. Hare's feet and cow hock are serious faults, and it must be admitted are seldom encountered.

A full-grown dog is about 23 to 27 1/2 inches at the shoulder; bitches, of course, run smaller, being about 21 to 22 inches. Size is not of primary importance, however.

The Bernese it recognized by the American Kennel Club, and it is hoped may attain widespread popularity in postwar days when importation again becomes possible. Certainly, he is a delight to the eye, and of great value on farms and large country estates.

A scale of points is given herewith:

General appearance	15
Size and height	5
Head	15
Body	15
Tail	10
Coat	10
Legs and feet	15
Color and markings	15

The article presented here is a recreation of

The Bernese Mountain Dog
By R. Caldwell

The article was published by the American Kennel Club in the April, 1943 AKC Gazette.

- Please note -
Certain advertisements and other article text segments have been removed as they do not pertain to this article. Additionally, some minor adjustments in the original layout and formatting have been made.

This historical article is presented for educational purposes. We would like to thank the AKC for supporting the Sport of Pure-bred Dogs and the Bernese Mountain Dog fancy.

SPECIAL FEATURE

A look at the Bernese

How the 'dog of the Alpine herdsmen' came from Switzerland to us

By Kathy E. Kear

The Bernese Mountain Dog is a working breed which originated in Switzerland, having a long history as a farmer's companion and working dog. It is one of four tricolor breeds known as Swiss Mountain Dogs: the Bernese Mountain Dog, the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog, the Appenzeller and the Entelbucher. The Bernese is the only one that has a long coat. Although these breeds are referred to as Swiss Mountain Dogs, none originated in the mountains nor were they bred specifically for use in mountainous terrain.

Justin, owned by Wynn MacDonald of Georgia, demonstrates the type of work his ancestors were bred to do.

The exact origins of the breed are somewhat questionable; however, one long-standing theory is that during the Roman invasion of Switzerland (then Helvetia) approximately 2,000 years ago, the Roman troops were accompanied by Mastiff-type dogs used to guard and drive the invaders' herds. It is speculated that these dogs remained with people residing in the Swiss Alpine region and were used to herd, protect and hunt.

Until now, this theory has been predominant and was accepted as correct; however, Margaret Bartschi, author of an upcoming German-language book on the origins of the Bernese, doesn't agree. According to Bartschi, the Roman theory is contradictory to scientific evidence. She says the Bernese originated from the large dogs belonging to farmers in northern Switzerland and southern Germany. Archeological findings indicate that dogs the size of the Bernese first began to appear in the Bronze and Iron Ages. Bartschi contends that at the onset of the 20th century the culture and population in the section of Switzerland where many Bernese were was a combination of three influences which included the Celtic, Romanic and Germanic. She notes that when projecting a long history of the breed, we should go no further back than A.D. 100-1000.

Bartschi says that due to the continuous movement of people before then, it would have been doubtful that a specific breed of dog could have existed in that region. After A.D. 1000 people were more apt to remain in one area; therefore, different types of dogs began to appear in various regions. In the Bern region, farmers could more easily afford to feed and house larger dogs, whereas in some other regions people were poor and could have only small dogs, if any. The Bernese became the "farm dog" of the midlands, providing protection of the farm and livestock. According to Bartschi, they also were used to drive cattle to higher areas, but she points out that those who herded during the summer preferred a smaller type of dog, quicker and better suited for mountainous terrain. She believes that the two types of tricolor "farm dogs" were mixed for quite some time before the breeds were recognized separately.

While several breeds referred to as "farm dogs" had developed, old paintings dating from the late 18th and early 19th centuries demonstrate that the Bernese had established its own distinct characteristics by that time.

The first mention of the Sennenhund ("dog of the Alpine herdsmen") in print was made in *Animals That Live in the Alps*, published

in 1853. In this book, two varieties of mountain dogs differing only in size and coat were documented. The duties of both breeds included those of guardian and drover of livestock. The smaller of the two breeds, the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog, is tricolor with identical markings to the longer-coated Bernese Mountain Dog, but it is short-haired and flat-coated.

Around 1853 cheeseries were under construction in the valleys and midlands. The mountain dogs were used as guard dogs and drovers; they frequently pulled small carts for weavers transporting baskets to market and for farmers hauling milk to the cheeseries. It was common for the youngest boy in the family to escort the dog to market; therefore, good temperament was valued highly.

Near the beginning of the century the breed was almost non-existent; St. Bernards became very popular and fewer Bernese were seen. Of those that did exist, some were tricolor while others were red, yellow or a combination of those colors and white. Some of the red and white dogs were sold and exported to other countries as St. Bernards.

To preserve the native Swiss breeds, several Swiss dog fanciers rallied and began to search for good specimens of the tricolor farm dogs, which they would buy and later breed.

Ch. Norbam's Southwind Equalizer gets affectionate with owner Russell Kear.

Albert Heim (a respected geologist and dog expert), Franz Schertenleib (an innkeeper) and several others were instrumental in revitalizing the popularity of the Swiss farm breeds. Heim is regarded as the father of the Bernese Mountain Dog breed, and he was one of the first members of the Swiss breed club (then known as the Durrbach Klub) established in 1907.

The name of the club is now the Schweizerischer Klub für Berner Sennenhunde, and it has become one of the largest breed clubs in Switzerland. In recognition of Heim's extensive study of the four Swiss mountain breeds, the Albert Heim Foundation was formed; it still exists today. Thanks to the efforts of fanciers such as Heim, the breed became increasingly popular in Switzerland, and eventually interest in the breed spread to other countries.

The Swiss name for the breed now is Berner Sennenhund. "Berner" refers to the canton of Bern, which was

A lovely head shot of two-year-old Justin.

the predominant center for breeding early in the century, and "Sennenhund" refers to the dog that accompanies the cattle herdsman ("Senn") on his journeys. The breed was originally called Durrbachler because of the area (Durrbach) where most of the dogs were discovered. The name of the breed was officially changed to Berner Sennenhund in 1908. Previously there had been no particular name for the tricolor farm dogs other than several descriptive nicknames, including Ringgi (white ring around neck), Blassi (white blaze on face), Bari ("little bear," with little or no white), Gelbackler ("yellow cheeks") and Vieraugli ("four eyes," because of tan markings over the eyes).

Across the world the breed has different names. In France and the French-speaking part of Switzerland the name Bouvier Bernois is used. In North America, as in England, the name Bernese Mountain Dog was adopted.

Records indicate that the first Bernese imported into the U.S. came in 1926 and belonged to Isaac Schiess, a Kansas farmer. Schiess unsuccessfully attempted to have the two Bernese, a dog and a bitch, registered with the American Kennel Club but was denied because the AKC didn't recognize the breed as purebred at that time. The pair were mated and produced five puppies; however, none were registrable with the AKC. In June 1935 an article about the breed written by Mrs. Egg Leach appeared in the *American Kennel Club Gazette*, which generated a great deal of interest. In 1937 the breed was recognized in the AKC stud registry and Glen Shadow, an avid fancier of the breed from Louisiana, successfully registered his two imports with the AKC.

In 1941, articles about the breed began to emerge in canine magazines and books, including an article in *National Geographic*. Shadow and several other fanciers continued to import more Bernese; however, during World War II importation halted. When the war ended, importing began again, and in 1968 Bernese fanciers united to form the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America. The club obtained permission from the AKC to hold its first sanctioned match in 1973 on Cape Cod in Massachusetts. In 1975 the AKC recognized the BMDCA as the national breed club. According to BMDCA records, as of December 1989 a total of 9,215 Bernese had been registered with the AKC since the breed was recognized in 1937.

In the beginning there were many difficulties encountered in the breeding programs. Due to the low numbers of Bernese in the U.S., breeders often had to travel long distances to breed their dogs. Hot weather was a problem, as were low sperm counts and infertility. Fortunately, imports continued to arrive from Switzerland and the gene pool gradually increased, which alleviated some of these problems. Inbreeding in the early breeding pro-

Bernshire Southwind Maverick, nine weeks, owned by Russell and Kathy Kear.

grams was scarce.

Dogs of uncertain parentage continued to be bred for several years, but their use decreased drastically by the mid-1940s. The first national specialty was held by the BMDCA in March 1976 in Harrisburg, PA, with an entry of 71 Bernese Mountain Dogs. Since the arrival of the Bernese in this country, interest in the breed has continued to grow. Many responsible breeders, with the guidance of the national club, have worked diligently for the betterment of the breed.

There has been much speculation about the relationship of the Bernese

to other breeds, yet the only known incident occurred in 1948 when a Bernese bitch (Christine v Lux) was accidentally mated by a Newfoundland dog (Pluto v Erlengut) who jumped a fence where she was kenneled. The breeding resulted in a litter of seven puppies, four of which survived (one bitch, three dogs). The surviving bitch was the only puppy from the litter to be bred. She had the appearance and temperament of a Newf and was bred to a Bernese Mountain Dog in 1951, producing eight puppies of which one dog and one bitch appeared to be characteristic of the true Bernese.

The Bernese bitch was given to Herr Mischler, the president of the breed club, and later was bred, producing five unmistakably Bernese puppies in 1952. Two of the puppies survived (one dog and one bitch), but the bitch was later euthanized. The dog, Alex v Angstorf, was an outstanding Bernese specimen and later became an international champion. Breeders initially were reluctant to introduce Alex into their breeding programs; however, he eventually sired 51 litters, from which no solid black puppies were produced. While the solid black Newf color disappeared within two generations, it was obvious that several positive influences of the Newf blood had remained, including improved temperaments, a broader chest, a less curly coat with greater length and a more well-balanced, heavier body.

In Switzerland today, the Schweizerischer Klub für Berner Sennenhunde is one of the largest breed clubs in the country, and the Bernese has become the most popular of the Swiss mountain breeds. Breeders must adhere to the strict rules of the club and are chastised heavily for violations of club policies. A breed controller is located in every region of Switzerland to advise novice breeders, to police facilities where puppies are reared, etc. The club determines which dogs and bitches may be used for breeding; only those that pass examination and have a satisfactory hip evaluation are registrable and can be bred. Puppies are all tattooed in the ear flap at six weeks of age with what will later be their registration number, but breeders are not allowed to sell puppies younger than eight weeks.

Dog shows in Switzerland vary greatly from North American dog shows. At Swiss shows, judges are carefully selected and must have extended experience. Additionally, every exhibitor is provided with a written evaluation of his dog and this information is later published. Members of the club are very concerned with the future of the breed and believe that proper planning should be practiced in breeding programs. They also emphasize the importance of good temperament as well as ensuring that the original working abilities of the breed continue.

The many functions of this hardy, working breed have been attested to by their past and present uses. Their working uses still include tracking, guarding and rescue. Since the introduction of the tractor they rarely pull carts to the cheeseries; however, they are still used extensively in rescue work, primarily in Germany and Switzerland. They are very intelligent, easily trainable dogs and often excel in tracking, which makes their use in rescue work so appropriate.

They are used in avalanches to find people buried under snow. The dog sniffs until he locates human scent beneath the snow and remains in the spot, barking until his handler arrives. In the Swiss Alps, rescue dogs are assigned in each recreational area and are transported with their handlers by helicopter to search areas. There is also an avalanche rescue competition organized by the Swiss Kennel Club each winter.

The dogs also do ambulance work, going into heavily wooded areas to locate injured people. This is different from avalanche rescue in that the dog returns to his handler and guides him back to the injured person. In earthquake rescue the dogs are trained to find people buried under rubble or in destroyed buildings. As with avalanche work, the dog barks until his handler arrives. This work is particularly risky to the animal, which must be trained to move guardedly and slowly among the rubble to avoid injury.

The Bernese Mountain Dog is a striking tricolor dog with a soft, flowing coat of medium length which may be slightly wavy but not curly. His primary body color is jet black with a white blaze on the face and white muzzle band, four white feet, a white tail tip, a white chest (resembling an inverted cross) and rich mahogany or tan markings above the eyes, on each cheek, on each leg between the white and the black, on each side of the chest and under his tail.

He is a large dog, standing squarely on strong, straight legs with a well-balanced, sturdy body, yet he is not as heavy as the St. Bernard. He is very alert, has a good disposition, and is dependable and very eager to please. He is also intelligent and readily trainable as well as strong and rugged enough to do the droving and draft work for which he was bred. Bitches should be feminine in appearance and dogs should be masculine.

According to the AKC breed standard, a dog should stand between 25 to 27½ inches at the withers and bitches from 23 to 26 inches. Bernese typically range in weight from 80 to 110 pounds.

The eyes should be dark brown and oval in shape with close-fitting eyelids. (Blue eye color is considered a serious fault and is a disqualification.) Ears hang close to the head, but when alert they are pulled forward so that the top of the ear is in line with the top of the skull. The skull is broad and flat on top with a well-defined but not extreme stop. The muzzle is straight and not too narrow. The flews of the mouth are barely open because the breed is a dry-mouthed breed, unlike the Newf and the St. Bernard. The nose should be black with no lack of pigmentation, and the teeth should form a perfect scissors bite with no missing teeth.

The chest should be deep and broad and the topline should be level. His bushy tail should be carried low when he is relaxed, not curled over his back. He should move freely and smoothly at a trot, with strong reach from the front and drive with the rear.

As far as grooming of this beautiful breed is concerned, a minimal amount of time is required. Spending 15 minutes several times a week brushing the coat, inspecting the dog for external parasites and examining him for sores or cuts is about all that is necessary. Although the coat is thick and somewhat long, it requires no stripping or clipping of any kind.

He should have his teeth cleaned and his nails clipped as needed. To prevent his ears from becoming inflamed or infected, the hair should be clipped or pulled periodically so that is doesn't grow down into the canal, and the ears should be cleaned with an antibacterial otic solution. As with any other breed, the dog should be dipped regularly during flea season to avoid infestation by fleas, ticks and mites.

Even though the Bernese coat is long and thick, there is little shedding except during the times of the year when they are dropping coat. Bitches usually will "blow" coat after a heat cycle or after having a litter of puppies. Dogs do not tend to drop coat as readily as bitches. During those times when the Bernese is blowing coat, a good bath followed with adequate

grooming will rid the coat of dead hair so that mats and tangles don't form.

Foremost among the many wonderful characteristics of the Bernese Mountain Dog is its unquestionable devotion to and love for humans. Even though it has been said that the Bernese is a one-person dog, he will eagerly attach himself to all family members who give him attention. These dogs are very adaptable companions who fare well in the city or the country, as long as they can be with people. They are wonderful with children, and they get along well with other animals. While they are not aggressive animals, they have a strong protective instinct and make good guard dogs, reserving their barking only to let you know that someone or something is on the premises.

A good example of the natural protective instinct that this breed possesses is Buddy, a 108-pound Bernese from Raleigh, NC, who saved his owner. Peggy Satterwhite was beaten, bound and gagged by a burglar; when Buddy heard the commotion inside Satterwhite's home, he bolted through a plate glass storm door and chased the intruder through a bedroom window. Though ashamed of what he had done to the door, he was uninjured and his heroic act earned him an honorable mention in the Ken-L Ration 1989 Dog Hero of the Year Awards.

Eve Menegoz, a respected and devoted Bernese owner, breeder and exhibitor currently residing in Canada, has been involved in the breed for 18 years. Menegoz enjoys showing her dogs in the conformation ring as well as doing obedience work, tracking and carting. Menegoz is from the Bernese Oberland, so the Bernese is her native breed, but she readily admits that sound temperament and beautiful appearance were what first attracted her to the breed. Of the qualities Bernese possess that make them good companion dogs, Menegoz mentions their desire to please, willingness to learn and soundness of mind and body. She says temperaments have improved greatly over the years, but that type and size are still issues to be reckoned with in future breeding programs.

Another esteemed and dedicated Bernese fancier is Susan Brightman of Leroy, NY. She has been involved with the breed since 1978 as an owner, breeder and exhibitor (conformation and obedience), and also has judged specialty and all-breed matches as well as the 1989 Canadian National Booster Sweepstakes. "My first impression of a Berner was that it was the most beautiful dog I had ever seen," she says. "That the Berner has a working temperament—easygoing and low-key—was the clincher."

Brightman says she strongly feels that Berners should be house dogs because of their need for human companionship; the exception would be a working farm, where people are outside much of the time interacting with the dog. She says Berners are ideal family pets, particularly if raised with children; however, she stresses the importance of parental guidance in teaching young children proper treatment of any pet.

Brightman says the breed has improved in all areas of orthopedics, but that much work is yet to be done in terms of longevity and health. As far as overall improvements in the breed, she says, "Tremendous strides have been made in balance, movement, rear angulation, markings and temperament." She points out that this has resulted in greater uniformity in the breed, but that some variation in type still exists. She says, "Even though the breed is more consistent, we are in jeopardy of losing the lovely heads, substantial bone and massive appearance that first attracted me to the breed." The solution, she says, is for breeders to avoid fads which deviate from the breed standard, so it is maintained with emphasis on type, structure and temperament.

For anyone who might be interested in obtaining a Bernese as either a pet or show dog, there are several factors to consider. First, there should be adequate facilities to house the dog and for him to get the exercise he needs. Because the Bernese is a large, muscular breed he needs fresh air and freedom to run and play several times a day. A fenced yard is ideal; however, a large kennel run would suffice. Living in an apartment isn't a problem as long as he can get his exercise through walks, playing in the park, etc. Swimming is also excellent exercise and most Bernese like to swim.

Any time the dog is not in a confined area, he should be supervised and not allowed to roam freely. If the dog is outside most of the time, he will need a place to take shelter, such as a well-insulated and properly roofed dog house. If he lives in the house, he needs his own area away from the main traffic of the family where he can go to rest and be alone. Bernese make excellent house dogs because they are eager to please their owners and learn very quickly what is acceptable behavior in the house. Bernese are very adaptable dogs and as long as they are cared for properly and get the exercise they need, they will thrive in indoor or outdoor situations, whether in an apartment or on a farm.

Another factor that must be considered is the lifestyle of the family. Ideally, all members of the family should discuss the addition of the dog and who will be responsible for its care.

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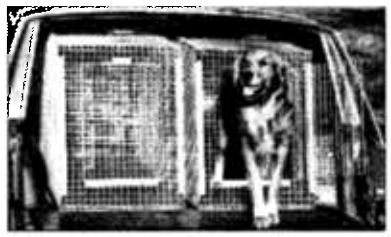

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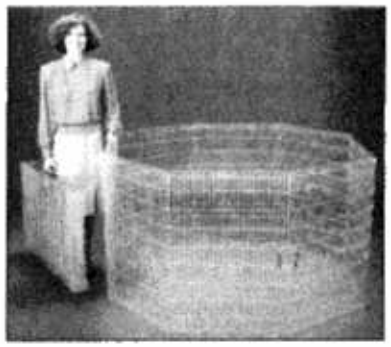

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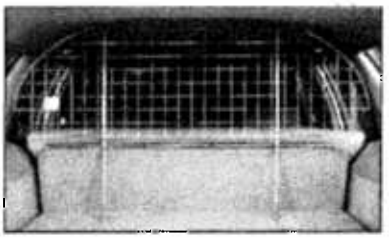

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Because Bernese are very people-oriented and depend on human companionship to be content, they do not like being alone for long periods of time. If your family is so busy that there will not be time to give proper love and attention to the dog on an ongoing basis, then a Bernese is not for you. Also, as with any animal that stays in the house, the family must be willing to accept occasional shedding and general "doggy" dirt that gets tracked in from time to time. If everyone agrees that these issues can be dealt with satisfactorily then the addition of a Bernese to the family will reward everyone's efforts with an enormous amount of unconditional love for years to come.

In addition to contemplating facilities and family lifestyle, the financial commitment involved in having the dog must be realized. Food costs vary, depending on the type and quality of food purchased. The Bernese is a large breed and will eat two medium-size meals a day. There will be expenses for proper veterinary care and preventative care. The dog should be vaccinated regularly as directed by a licensed veterinarian and should be treated for internal and external parasites as necessary. Because the average life span of the Bernese Mountain Dog is seven to eight years, the financial commitment is for a substantial time and must be considered.

Once all of these issues have been considered and your family has made the decision to add a Bernese to the household, you will need to begin your search for a reputable breeder. As mentioned earlier, the national breed club in the U.S. is the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America; part of its mission is to provide educational materials about the breed as well as breeder referrals. It also can put you in touch with regional breed clubs. For information, you may write to the BMDCA secretary, Lilian Ostermiller, P.O. Box 54, Flemington, NJ 08822. Another source of information are the breeder ads in canine magazines. Visiting dog shows and talking with breeders and exhibitors will also be very helpful to you. This will give you an opportunity to see the different types associated with various lines.

Once you have obtained the necessary information you will want to contact the breeder you have chosen. Make arrangements to visit the breeder and see his or her dogs at a mutually convenient time. Spend time with the adult dogs to get a realistic idea of what they are really like.

The dogs should appear happy and well-adjusted and should not be shy, fearful or show any aggression toward you. You will want to pay very close attention to the dispositions of the adults and puppies (if there are any) because temperament is hereditary. The manner in which the puppies act and react will also be a good reflection of how they have been raised and socialized by the breeder. Puppies that have been kenneled and have had little exposure to household noise and activities are not usually as outgoing or friendly as those puppies that have been handled and reared inside the breeder's home.

When the time comes to choose your puppy there are some basic suggestions to follow whether you're purchasing a show- or pet-quality puppy. First, the puppies should be playful and happy with a healthy, gleaming coat which feels very soft and thick. There should be no discharge from the eyes or nose. Examine the eyes to see that there is no ectropion (eyelids turning out) or entropion (eyelids turning in). The puppy should have a firm, round belly without looking overweight or bloated and should feel solid when you pick him up. He should appear to stand squarely on all four legs and should move freely with the exception of the clumsiness common in young puppies. Also, check to see that he is not infested with fleas or ticks.

As with many large-breed dogs, there are a number of bone disorders that may afflict the Bernese Mountain Dog. Some may occur as early as puppyhood and others don't appear until later in life. The degree to which each dog is affected will vary according to other factors including genetic predisposition as well as environmental factors such as feeding, housing and exercise.

A long-term problem in the breed is chronic hip dysplasia. With CHD, the hip joint develops abnormally, causing laxity in the hip socket. It is a disease seen in many breeds, with a much higher incidence in breeds in which mature dogs exceed 40 pounds. The disease is progressive and generally will worsen as the dog gets older. The animal's quality of life will depend on the degree to which it is affected, ranging from mild to severe, with crippling occurring to varying degrees. In the Bernese, the symptoms often emerge between four and seven months of age, when the puppy is going through a rapid period of growth in size and activity level. Signs of CHD in puppies include decreased activity, reluctance to rise when lying down and sitting frequently. As the disease progresses, there may be more obvious signs of pain and discomfort as well as visible deterioration of the muscle of the thigh and stifle areas.

Research has shown that several factors can contribute to the likeli-

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hood that a dog will develop CHD. First, it has been determined that the disease is genetically predisposed; environmental factors determine the final outcome. Research has shown that overfeeding with foods containing high concentrations of protein, calcium and phosphorous cause abnormally rapid growth which can prompt anatomical changes resulting in bone disorders. Additionally, breeders sometimes will supplement the diets of nursing dams and puppies, which tends to accelerate growth. This could result in disproportionate tissue/cartilage growth which creates stress on the hip joint.

Should a dog develop CHD, the treatment will vary according to the severity of the disease. Selective breeding is by far the best method of decreasing genetic predisposition. Because not all dogs who have CHD are symptomatic, any included in a breeding program should have their hips X-rayed, evaluated and scored before being bred. Inasmuch as environment is concerned, good management practices in feeding, housing and exercise are highly recommended.

E.A. Corley, DVM, PhD, project director with the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals, recently conducted a study of hip dysplasia in the Bernese Mountain Dog. According to Corley, between January 1974 and December 1988 the OFA evaluated hip X-rays of 1,678 Bernese. The OFA assigns numbers only to those dogs who are a minimum of 24 months old and who are determined to be dysplasia-free after comparison of their X-rays with dogs of the same breed, age and weight. The hip conformation of dogs receiving numbers is rated by OFA as fair, good or excellent. Dogs that do not pass the review are not given a number but are rated as mildly dysplastic, moderately dysplastic or severely dysplastic. Of the Bernese evaluated in the study, 28.1 percent were found to have some degree of dysplasia; however, this percentage was a significant decrease from the percentage of dysplastic dogs 10 years ago. The OFA has determined that there is an approximate 1.5 percent increase a year in normal ratings with increases in good and excellent ratings and decreases in fair and moderately dysplastic ratings. Corley also mentioned that the Swedes show a decline in frequency of dysplasia at 1.4 percent a year from their evaluations. Corley points out that of the Bernese currently registered with AKC, only 30 to 31 percent have been evaluated by OFA. Because not all dogs are evaluated the percentage could be affected somewhat, although conscientious breeders do have their dogs checked for CHD before breeding them.

Another bone disorder which sometimes occurs in Bernese is osteochondritis dissecans, which occurs in many species of animals. The affected areas in dogs include the elbow, hock, stifle (knee) and shoulder; the shoulder is the most common site for OCD in the Bernese. The disease strikes when the ends of the long bones fail to ossify (transform cartilage to bone), resulting in the degeneration of cartilage on the bone ends. The cartilage becomes unusually thick, and eventually the deeper layers of cartilage begin to die. When this happens, cracks appear in the joints and often a flap forms or loose bone fragments accumulate. Friction occurs as the bone ends rub together, causing inflammation in the joint. Lameness—usually limping on one foreleg—generally develops between five and eight months of age. While the lameness may disappear if the dog is not allowed to exercise freely, it may reoccur when normal activity resumes. OCD usually is diagnosed by X-ray because the lesions or surface changes can be seen this way. Medication and rest may help alleviate pain, but surgery generally is required to remove fragments from the joint. The incidence of hereditary OCD in the shoulder is high; therefore, it is very important that any dog who has OCD (even if successfully treated) is eliminated from breeding programs.

Dr. Heather Pidduck of the University of London Royal Veterinary College conducted a study of OCD using 1,200 Bernese. Her findings coincided with other studies, with a higher percentage of males in her study having OCD. She also discovered proven hereditary influences, the impact of rearing and management and that faster-growing dogs were at greater risk of developing the disorder. Pidduck suggests selective breeding and proper feeding and management for slower, more uniform growth.

Panosteitis is another disease common to large breeds which strikes the long bones and results in lameness. There is a 75 percent higher incidence in males, which may be due to the larger size and heavier weight of adult male dogs. Symptoms include pain, limited activity and limping in one or more legs. It has been known to occur in dogs from six months to two years old and may involve more than one bone. This disease is diagnosed radiographically, and analgesics usually are the only necessary treatment.

In addition to reviewing hip, shoulder and elbow X-rays, some breeders also have their dogs' eyes checked for abnormalities. Eye examination by a licensed veterinary ophthalmologist is necessary to rule out any eye abnormalities such as lesions and cataracts.

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Ectropion is caused by infection or inflammation of the cornea or conjuntiva, resulting from the rolling out of the eyelids (generally the lower ones). Typically, this condition causes reddened, watery eyes and discomfort. Surgery is necessary to alleviate pain. This problem is hereditary; therefore, dogs who have ectropion should not be bred.

Another eye problem, entropion, is caused by the eyelid's rolling inward; the lashes cause irritation of the cornea. If this is left untreated, a corneal ulcer may develop, resulting in damaged vision. Like ectropion, the eyes are red and painful and have a watery discharge. Several separate surgeries may be needed for complete correction. Dogs with entropion should not be used for breeding purposes.

Gastric torsion ("bloat") is a serious problem which occurs primarily in large, deep-chested breeds. It strikes an estimated 60,000 dogs each year and is brought on by the accumulation of gas and fermenting food in the stomach, which may cause the stomach to twist, restricting blood flow and blocking entry to and exit from the stomach. The abdomen will enlarge rapidly, causing the dog great discomfort. [Editor's note: The exact causes of "bloat" have not yet been determined.]

Symptoms of bloat include restlessness, anxiety, unsuccessful attempts to vomit or to have a bowel movement and rigidity of the abdominal area. This always should be considered a veterinary emergency because death could result if the condition is left untreated. The veterinarian may have to perforate the abdominal wall to relieve the pressure and surgery may be necessary. Because of their predisposition to bloat, experts recommend that large breeds be fed two medium-size meals a day instead of free feeding or one large daily meal. Also, a dog that has just eaten should not be allowed to drink excessive amounts of water and should not exercise actively for at least an hour.

The Bernese Mountain Dog has been plagued with various kinds of cancer. Studies have determined that some types of tumors are hereditary, resulting in a greater incidence of certain tumors in some breeds. While heredity is a component, most authorities agree that other factors are involved, including diet, exposure to chemicals and radiation and various viruses.

Two types of tumors (systemic and malignant histiocytosis) are particularly common in the Bernese. Dr. P.F. Moore conducted a study of systemic histiocytosis in the Bernese Mountain Dog in 1984. He found that the disease involved benign histiocytes (cells) and followed a prolonged course; the skin and peripheral lymph nodes were affected severely in most cases. He noted saturation with histiocytes of multiple tissues, including the liver, kidneys, skin, lungs, lymph nodes, bone marrow, spleen, testes, orbital tissues and others. The onset of the disease in the dogs studied was between two and eight years of age. Moore further postulated that there was possible genetic susceptibility to the disease.

A study initiated by Moore and A. Rosin focused on malignant histiocytosis in the Bernese Mountain Dog. In this disease the cells involved are malignant rather than benign, and it is very similar to human malignant histiocytosis. The disease progresses quite rapidly; six months is the average survival time after onset. Of the 13 Bernese involved in the study 11 were males. Symptoms include weight loss, loss of appetite and lethargy. Affected lymph nodes were mostly internal; non-nodal infiltration of tissues was also found. The lungs are most likely to be affected and neurological disturbances may occur. This particular type of cancer seems to afflict primarily the Bernese breed, because it has been reported to occur only twice in other breeds.

Because the issue of cancer in the breed has been one of increasing concern to Bernese fanciers, the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America has established an ongoing cancer study.

Issues surrounding the breed in the U.S. include educating Bernese owners on the proper care and management of their dogs and educating judges and exhibitors on the AKC breed standard. The increasing popularity of the breed is of great concern to many Bernese fanciers, and breeding must be controlled to avoid mismanagement for financial gain. Fascination with the breed has spread to several countries, and international buyers are offering American breeders large sums of money for puppies and adult dogs. Future breeding programs must continue to concentrate on alleviating hereditary health problems. Conscientious breeders can contribute to the betterment of the Bernese Mountain Dog by working to maintain and improve the quality of dogs produced while retaining the working abilities and integrity of this wonderful breed.

Sources of information for this piece were:

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Interviews by mail with Eve Menegoz (P.O. Box 210, Hudson, Quebec J0P 1J0 Canada) and Susan Brightman (Rt. 20, Leroy, NY 14482; (716) 768-2095).

Berner lover Kathy Kear is a communications expert living in Knoxville, TN. □

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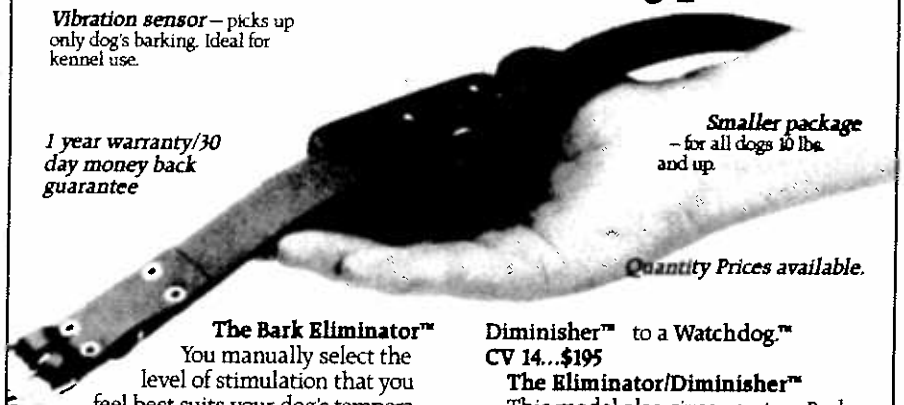

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Bernese Antiques

Phil Worrow

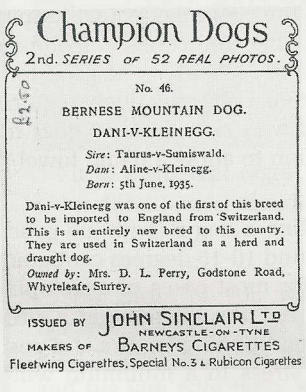
It would have been nice to be able to pen an article about all the Bernese related antiques and bric-a-brac. Until a few years ago the definition of an antique tended to be something, usually furniture, which dated from before the accession of Queen Victoria (1837). Nowadays a more pragmatic approach has changed this to anything over 100 years old, falling in line with American customs & excise. Given that, to quote Cochrane, the first public mention of the breed (Durrbachler) was written in the newspaper *Centralplatt* in 1899 and the Durrbachler Club founded in Burgdorf in 1907 (and in 1908 its name changed to The Bernersennenhund Club) it is not surprising that a "Bernese Antique" is, at present, an impossibility.

If therefore, we expand *antiques* to include "Collectibles" (anything that can be collected!) and expand "*Bernese*" to include a few other breeds, or dogs engaged in draught work, then there is, just, scope for an article.

Cigarette cards

Of the many sets of cigarette cards issued there is only one card in one set that depicts a Bernese. Issued in 1938 by John Sinclair Ltd, the "Champion Dogs, 2nd series of 52 real photos" shows Dani von Kleinegg, born 5th June 1935 and one of the first Bernese imported into England by Mrs Perry, just up the road from here in Whyteleaf, Surrey.

Whilst the first series of Champion Dogs is not hard to find, the life span of the second series was curtailed by the Second World War and they are somewhat more scarce. The card was issued in two sizes, corresponding to packets of 10 and 20 cigarettes. Looking at our copy, the price is pencilled on the back - £2.50 and I suppose we must have bought it some ten years or so ago. Perhaps £5 might be a realistic price to pay today.


Champion Dogs
2nd. SERIES OF 52 REAL PHOTOS.

No. 46.

BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG.

DANI-V-KLEINEGG.

Sire: Taurus-v-Sumiswald.
Dam: Aline-v-Kleinegg.
Born: 5th June, 1935.

Dani-v-Kleinegg was one of the first of this breed to be imported to England from Switzerland. This is an entirely new breed to this country. They are used in Switzerland as a herd and draught dog.

Owned by: Mrs. D. L. Perry, Godstone Road, Whyteleafe, Surrey.

ISSUED BY JOHN SINCLAIR LTD NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE
MAKERS OF BARNEYS CIGARETTES
Fleetwing Cigarettes, Special No. 3 & Rubicon Cigarettes

Dani-V-Kleinegg

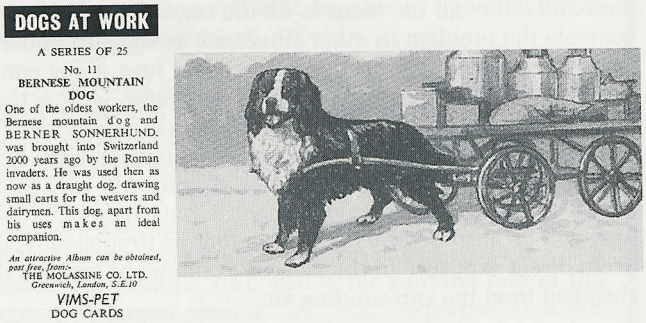
Dani-V-Kleinegg

There are a number of sets of cards depicting dogs. These can look quite good framed up, especially those painted by the great artist Arthur Wardle. Personally speaking, I think two frames of 25 cards look better than one of 50. It is possible to buy special mounts with cut-outs for the cards. The card is dropped into the cut out and the mount glazed front and back. This way the card is not damaged and both front & back are readable.

When buying cards for mounting, check the condition obviously, but pay special attention to the first & last in the set as so often these are the most damaged. Another tip, if considering framing a set of cards, check that they are all the same orientation - landscape or portrait. Although standard mounts are available, if your set contains both landscape & portrait orientations you will have to design and cut your own mounts. NEVER use an adhesive of any type to mount cigarette or post cards unless you wish to render them totally valueless

There is a catalogue of cigarette cards that also gives prices. Like so many price catalogues the "going rate" is usually a given percentage of this catalogue price, not the full price.

Different (in collecting terms) to cigarette cards are trade cards. These were distributed by various means and those given with tea are the best known. Below is a card issued by Vims. Trade cards, generally, are of very little value, more the thing to pick up at car boots and village halls than proper antique fairs.


DOGS AT WORK

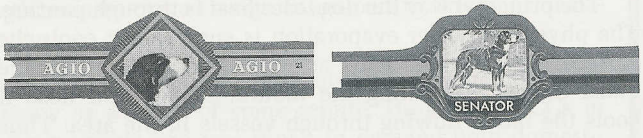
A SERIES OF 25

No. 11
BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG

One of the oldest workers, the Bernese mountain dog and BERNER SONNERHUND. was brought into Switzerland 2000 years ago by the Roman invaders. He was used then as now as a draught dog, drawing small carts for the weavers and dairymen. This dog, apart from his uses makes an ideal companion.

An attractive Album can be obtained, post free, from:-
THE MOLASSINE CO. LTD.
Greenwich, London, S.E.10

VIMS-PET
DOG CARDS



Cigar Bands

Unlike postage stamps and cigarette cards, there is no definitive catalogue for cigar bands so details are scare and who knows what might turn up. Some years ago I bought a group of cigar bands. Three are branded "Washington" and depict a Bernese, a Great Swiss (probably) and an Appenzeller (probably). The pictures are photographic in bluish monochrome. Another is branded "Senator" and shows a (painted) Great Swiss in colour and the last, branded "Agio" shows a head study of a Bernese or Great Swiss. Whilst I have made great inroads into the E.U.'s tobacco mountain ,over the years, it has been by means of cigarettes and not cigars so I do not have any idea whatsoever of the country of origin or date. Regarding price, I suppose that it would be fair to expect to pay £1 or so each. As a possible source of cigar bands try asking the cigarette card dealers. Whilst anything can, and often does, turn up anywhere it would probably be worth attending a specialist cigarette card or ephemera fair for these.

Postage Stamps

So far, I have found but one stamp depicting Bernese. Issued by, of all places, Cambodia. It is a "Banana Republic" special and it is fair to say that the only reason for its issue is for collectors of pretty pictures on sticky paper to buy it and generate revenue, rather than as a genuine postage stamp. The club stall did once have a few copies of this stamp and it was priced at £2.50. I visited Stanley Gibbons in the

Strand to try and get more for the club. So highly do they value it they laughed me out of the shop!

It is quite possible that there are other stamps depicting Bernese nowadays but it is likely that their value will only be that of novelty.

Postcards

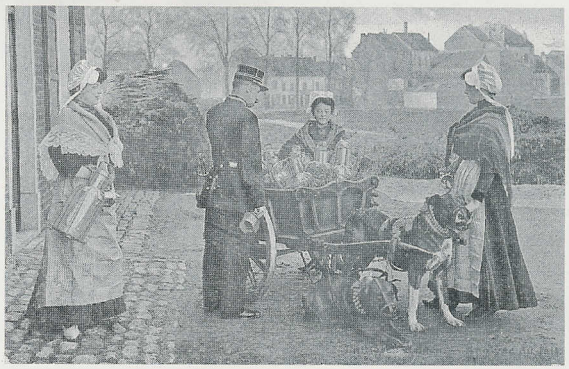
Probably the oldest card that I have that can be attributed to a Bernese with certainty is illustrated. It is described on the reverse as " Berner Sennenhund, Bouvier bernois, Swiss mountain dog" and was issued and printed in Switzerland. The finish is matt as opposed to glossy photographic and it probably dates to the 50s or early 1960s. It is shown below on the left. On the right another entitled "Berner Sennenhund" & post marked 1964

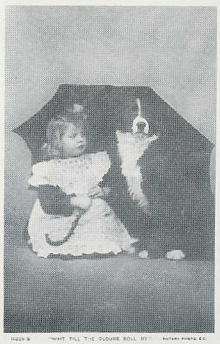
Post Marked 1964 (Belgium)

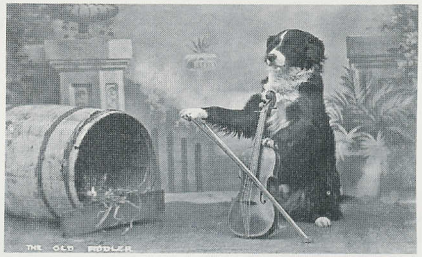
If you let your imagination roam, there are a myriad of cards depicting dogs that might be Bernese, could nearly be Bernese or "well I like it so what", dating back to Edwardian times. There are also many postcards of draft dogs, both photographic and painted. Invariably showing mongrels and predominantly Flemish in origin they date from the turn of the century until the Second World War. Prices for postcards vary greatly and are as dependent upon their appeal as their rarity in many cases, but the vast majority can be bought for less than £5

The three post cards shown date between 1910-12. None actually are Bernese but could form a basis for a collection.

It is worth mentioning that in the days before the telephone there would often be six or seven collections and deliveries a day of the post. It was possible to select a postcard, perhaps with a photo of some current local event (newspapers had no photographs) and write to a friend to arrange to meet that day for tea, say and to get a reply. Consequently postcards today form a varied source of collecting themes and there always seems to be a queue in front of dealers.







To be continued, December 2005

Bernese Antiques

(Continued from July 2005 magazine)

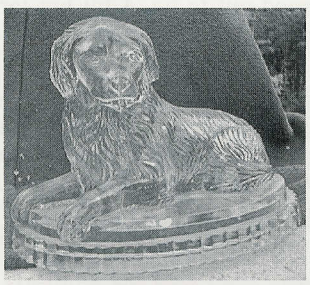
Phil Worrow

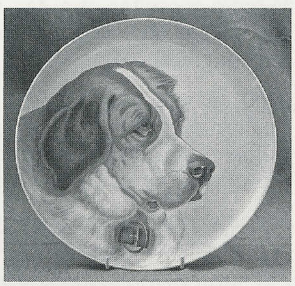
Ceramics.

The earliest ceramics depict exceedingly few breeds of dog. Porcelain in mid to late eighteen century England was very expensive. The breed in fashion at the time was the Pug and models of these were made by Chelsea, Derby and in "Wheildon" type creamware pottery. They are most desirable and quite expensive. Staffordshire "Fatback" type pottery figure groups made in the nineteenth century sometimes show rustic type characters with dogs but are not really discernable as any particular breed.

The ubiquitous Staffordshire pottery mantelpiece Spaniel pairs can be found quite easily. More difficult is to date them as they were produced continuously into the twentieth century. More recently they have been reproduced. A note of warning ladies, should you decide to show a pair of these Spaniels on your window cill – be careful which way around you display them !

Following Landseer's painting of Newfoundlands and then the "adoption" of St Bernards as an almost English breed, models of larger breeds appeared. There are pressed glass models of Newfies dating from the late C19th that can pass off as Bernese, if you are desperate! Prices for these vary between £50-£120. They are available in amber, blue & green as well as clear glass.

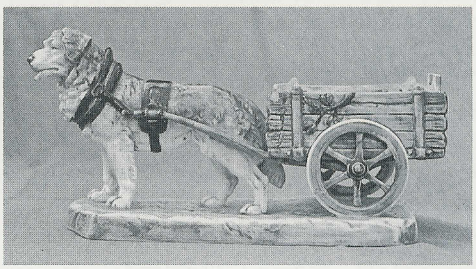


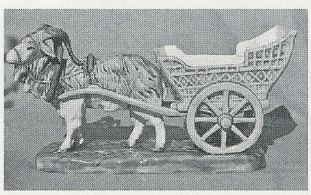


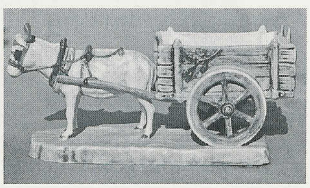
A word on condition: pottery, being opaque, can re "restored". That is, a two part resin filler can be used to replace missing pieces and paint can colour it in. Being opaque it can be hard to notice such restoration but at the end of the day – "BROKE IS BROKE". Porcelain, being translucent is harder to "restore" as when the item is held to the light a dark shadow can be seen where the paint covers damaged areas. Glass, short of having any broken areas ground away, cannot be restored. Damage to glass items therefore greatly affects it value.

The plate illustrated showing a St Bernard head study is probably by an amateur hand. The plate itself has a Minton impressed date mark for 1872. The dog's collar bears the artist's name, H Steele, and the date 74. Ladies' amusements were few and far between in genteel Victorian society. Along with needlepoint/tapestry, painting pictures or writing (unpublished generally) poetry another diversion was the painting of plates. Once finished the piece would be taken to a local pottery to be "fired".

Produced in Czechoslovakia, certainly immediately after the First World War, and probably in corresponding Bohemia before the war are the wares of Royal Dux. Two, in my opinion, excellent models of St Bernards pulling a cart were made. One is a dog, the other a bitch. These models may not look too much like a modern day St Bernard but I have had the opportunity to compare them with prints of named dogs of circa 1900 and they are quite realistic. Remember also the "English"/"Continental" type split in St Bernards. These models are very rarely marked "Royal Dux" and you might be lucky to pick one up from an unknowing dealer for less than £100-120, but if it is marked then £120 is cheap. In the twenty odd years that we have had Bernese I have only seen five of these models. The Dog is shown below, the bitch is very slightly smaller and the wheels on the cart have the spokes moulded in relief rather than actually cut out. On a similar theme from this factory are models of a Donkey, Horse and Goat each pulling a "posy holder" cart. All are of quite good quality. The donkey is the most common, the goat with its long horns, the most likely to be damaged. Until recently I thought this the full range but at Alexandra Palace recently we discovered a model with a "Bulldog" like creature, in a sit, between shafts. Not the best of quality, it unfortunately bore a full "Royal Dux" factory mark and was marked at up for £140. Sooner or later someone will write a book on Royal Dux acknowledging these pieces and, I suspect, their price will rise accordingly.







The Low Countries produced a number of draught dog ceramics. We have a majolica-like model of a dog & cart with woman milk maid. It is not the most glamorous looking dog (a mongrel) or milk maid (about seventy years old!) but it does portray the lot of the poor working draught dog right down to the cobbles. The market for Majolica wares is driven very much by collectors in the States and even with a little damage this model was expensive.

Delft in Holland has long produced ceramics, initially this was a soft pottery body covered with a white tin glaze and decorated in blue so as to copy the porcelain made in China. This early "delft" was later produced in Britain, initially by potters fleeing Holland & persecution by the evil catholic regime. From Britain the wares were exported to the colonies, particularly the Americas. These wares are very rarely marked and never marked "Delft". Original delft models or toys are even rarer than dinner wares, they are very collectable With dinner wares even a lightly damaged plate will cost £50 upwards. In the twentieth century, between the wars, porcelain models were produced at Delft and are often marked as such underneath. They follow the general form of the majolica model illustrated and often come as a pair with a model of a cow and

cowherd. The carts nearly always have detachable lids in the form of milk churns. Although more common than the Royal Dux models, as they were souvenir pieces, they are not that easy to find today and under £30 for a singleton is cheap.

Similar, but much smaller, wares were cast in brass, often with the name of a town engraved or cast into the rear of the cart, the one shown below has "Ypres" (forever to be pronounced "Wipers") on the back.

Books

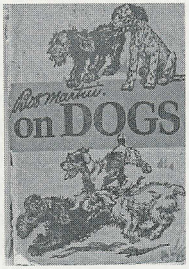
Many pre-war books can be picked up for a couple of pounds. I have illustrated "Bob Martins – On Dogs" booklet that is quite interesting to read. If nothing else it shows how great the changes in dog husbandry, veterinary diagnosis and care have been over the last half century.

BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG

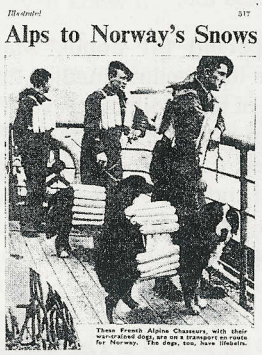
Berner Sennenhund : Dürbächler

Here is the second largest of the Swiss Mountain Dogs or Sennenhunde. Being long-coated, he is rather like the large Swiss draught dog, but is smaller of limb. The breed is a favourite one in the Berne breeds . . . the general help that observe how the St. Bernard is so very well known, whilst his cousin, the Bernese, who has been in Switzerland far longer, is comparatively a stranger outside his own country. He is often used as a haulage dog for the market gardens of Berne. The Bernese was first imported through Scotland in 1926 ; since then, largely through the pioneering work of Mrs. Rig-Leach, the breed's " Auntie," it has advanced by 1937 to the 32nd Breed of the Working Kennel Club.

Height : 23 ins. Weight : about 95 lb. Colour : black, deep russet brown and white. Coat long, smoothing and silky.



Warne produced a large series of "Observer" books, priced originally at five bob each. The "Observer book of Dogs" has much to answer for. It was here, as a ten year old, I fell in love with Bernese. In the early sixties I went with my father to Crufts (Olympia in those days) on both days (Sporting day & non-sporting day) to see Bernese and, hopefully, to convince my parents this was the dog for us. Alas there were no Bernese in the country in those days. I show the Bernese page (above), note the weight given as "about 55 Lbs" – confusing things these damn French kilogrammes!



Illustrated 517

Alps to Norway's Snows

These French Alpine Chasseurs, with their war-stained dogs, are on a transport en route for Norway. The dogs, too, have lifebelts.

One fascinating photograph of Bernese is shown on page 517 of "The War Illustrated" May 17th 1940. The photo shows Bernese belonging to the French Army en-route to Norway and kitted out with life jackets. It is shown (left) but it is a photocopy from the BMDC of GB magazine volume 2 No 10 (where the whole page is reproduced) hence the poor quality of reproduction. I assume that this book is a bound collection of a weekly or monthly publication and would, eventually, have spanned the entire war years. These books, when found, are very inexpensive – a pound or two each. One to look out for just for the curiosity value

Finally, one to start collecting. - Jude Simmonds "Book of the Breed" series – "The complete Bernese Mountain Dog" is now out of print. A shame – it is a good book but is it now an "antique of the future"?

First printed Bernfax Feb 2005.
Re-printed with permission and thanks to the author, Phil Worrow

Bernese Mountain Dogs Take Rapidly to the South

Glen L. Shadow
Rushton, Louisiana

Reprint from *Western Kennel World*, January 1938

In June, 1935, while recovering from an attack of influenza, I read an article published in the American Kennel Gazette, written by Mrs. L. Egg-Leach of Winterthur, Switzerland, about the Bernese Mountain Dogs of the Swiss Alps. I read this article some two or three times as this was the dog that I so much admired from the pictures showing the dogs drawing the milk carts in my first grade reader when I was a child.

The childish desire to own some of these dogs was not completely abandoned, and while I was in France in 1918 and 1919, I had the opportunity of seeing some of these dogs which rekindled this childhood fancy. Because financial circumstance did not permit me to buy or import these dogs at the time it was necessary for me to abandon the idea as there were none to be had in the United States and no one had thought enough of this particular breed to import them.

After reading Mrs. Egg-Leach's article, I took the liberty to write her and ask for further information regarding them as well as some assistance in making a purchase. After some months of correspondence and untiring efforts on the part of Mrs. Egg-Leach, she succeeded in buying for me on August 30, 1936, Fridy v Haslenbach from Mr. Fritz Stalder, breeder. This was the best female dog of her breed in all Europe and it was useless to say that a very fancy price was required to purchase this bitch. Fridy was awarded first prize in the 1935 dog show at Basle; also Excellent and C. A. C. I. B., which is the highest champion certificate on the continent of Europe, called the International Beauty Championship Certificate and all who have seen her since her arrival in the United States agree that it would be difficult to produce a more perfect or beautiful dog.

On September 28, 1936, I forwarded draft to Mrs. Egg-Leach to purchase Quell v Tiergarten (Felix, kennel name) from Mr. G. Walti. He was not the best male dog in Switzerland, but he was the best to be had as the owner of the best male refused to sell him at any price.

On Sunday morning, November 1, 1936, Fridy and Felix left their homes in Switzerland to embark on the Normandie at Havre, France, which sailed on November 4, for New York. They arrived at New York on November 9th. This date added a new chapter to dogdom in the United States as they were the first and only pair of Bernese Mountain dogs of the Swiss Alps to ever land on American soil. On Saturday evening, November 14, 1936, these dogs arrived in

excellent condition and were met by their new master, Glen L. Shadow of Ruston, Louisiana. After freeing them they seemed to be perfectly contented and after some weeks of personal attention, I transferred them to my country estate. These dogs have been in Louisiana on year on the 14th day of November, 1937. They have withstood the heat exceptionally well and have adapted themselves to our customs and seem to understand our language readily.

I have never seen or heard of a pair of dogs that have caused so much interest among the public in general as these Bernese. On one occasion I took Felix to Monroe, Louisiana, to the Bendall-Vaughn-Wright Clinic to have an X-ray made of his chest and neck. Everyone in the clinic, doctors, nurses, visitors and patients who could possibly get close to this dog, asked numerous questions and admired him greatly. On another occasion Fridy and Felix were exhibited to the Hilcrest Grammar School of our city when they were studying about Switzerland, and the children and teachers were all delighted with them and wanted to touch their beautiful silky coats.

Anyone looking into these dogs' deep brown eyes can see that they have a wonderful understanding and a kind, loving disposition. They are most affectionate toward children and are quite courageous in defending their rights. As a working dog I have never seen one that I think equals the Bernese Dog and if the homes that have suffered the loss of children from vicious kidnappers had had one of these dogs as a pet and pal for their child, no one would have been able to molest them without first killing the dog.

I am sorry that I do not have the vocabulary to describe these dogs as they are entitled to be and to picture them to the readers of this article as they really are. The picture on the front cover of this issue is Fridy v Haslenbach and anyone desiring further information may obtain same from the writer and it would be a pleasure to tell anyone about this wonderful breed. I buy them because I am a dog lover, and I may perhaps in the future have a few puppies to dispose of where I am assured they will have the best of homes and the best of care.

I also want to tell the readers of this article that it was only through my friends, Mrs. L. Egg-Leach, 35 Hochwachtstrasse, Winterthur, Switzerland, that I am today the owner of the best Bernese Mountain bitch in the world and through her untiring efforts that the U. S. A. can claim the best of the breed. She rendered months of service without any charge to me or the sellers and much credit is due her for this new breed and we now have recognized in the American Stud Book.

On April 21, 1937, I had a letter from Mr. Perry B. Rice, Secretary of the American Kennel Club, stating that the Board of Directors held a meeting on Tuesday, April 13, 1937, and it was officially decided to recognize the Bernese Mountain Dog as a new breed in the Working Class. These are the first and only dogs of this breed to ever be registered with the American Kennel Club or the Secretary of Agriculture.

For the benefit of those who are interested the standard for the Bernese Mountain Dog is as follows:

A well-balanced dog, standing from 25 to 27 inches in shoulder, bitches up to 25 inches; with jet black, silky and slightly wavy coat of medium length; white markings on chest, feet, tip of tail and on foreface; rich russet brown markings distributed over muzzle, thighs, under body and tail; with a brown spot over each eye; which may never be missing; dark brown eyes; which seem to invite trust; ears V-shaped and set on high, hanging close to head; flat, broad, well developed skull; medium stop and short, broad muzzle; level mouth; long bushy tail or brush, carried low, slightly upward swirl permissible; compact, not too long body; muscular, straight fore-legs and well developed stifles; and an all around robust dog. This gives a fairly good picture of a really good specimen of the Bernese species of Swiss Mountain Dogs. – Glen L. Shadow, Ruston, Louisiana.

On the Cover

On the cover for this issue is the Bernese Mountain dog, Fridy v. Haslenbach, born Mar. 9th, 1934, bred by Fritz Stalder, Haslenchbach, near Sumiswald, Switzerland and purchased on August 30th, by Glen Shadow of Ruston, Louisiana. Fridy, at the Swiss International Dog Show at Basle, 1935 won 1st prize. Excellent and C. A. C. I. B., which is the highest champion certificate on the continent of Europe, called the International Beauty Championship Certificate. Mr. Shadow has prepared an article on this breed which appears on page 4 of this issue.

Photo by Glen Shadow

Fridy v. Haslenbach

Western Kennel World

No. 417 JANUARY 1938 20c

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The Bernese Mountain Dog, FRIDY v. HASLENBACH
Owned by Glen L. Shadow—Ruston, Louisiana

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Vol. XXXI, No. 1 — SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA—JANUARY, 1938 — Whole No. 417

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Advertising Rates on Page 27

COMING PACIFIC COAST DOG SHOWS

1938

Jan. 15-16—Pacific Coast Pekingese Club, Los Angeles, Calif. Mrs. R. G. Shute, Sec'ty, 11453 Ventura Blvd., No. Hollywood, Calif.

Jan. 22-23—Golden Gate Kennel Club, San Francisco, California. Alex Wolfen, Sec'y., 443 Front St., San Francisco, California

Feb. 12-13—Pasadena Kennel Club, Pasadena, Calif. Jack Bradshaw, Sup't, 1814 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles Calif.

Feb. 27—San Bernardino Valley Kennel Club, San Bernardino, Calif. Jack Bradshaw, 1814 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles, Calif.

Mar. 5-6—Oakland Kennel Club, Oakland Auditorium, Oakland, Calif. A. L. Rosemont, Sup't, 20 Sycamore St., San Francisco, Calif.

Mar. 12-13—Tucson Kennel Club, Tucson, Ariz. Fred Finney, Sec'y, Box 2622, Tucson, Ariz.

Mar. 18-19—Portland Kennel Club, Portland, Ore. Mrs. L. O. Hatchell, Sec'y, 425 N. E. Buffalo St., Portland, Ore.

March 19-20—Santa Anita Kennel Club, Arcardia Calif. Jack Bradshaw, Supt. 1814 S. Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, Calif.

Apr. 24—Riverside Kennel Club, Riverside, Calif. Mrs. Arthur Sharland, Sec'y 5130 Hallwood Ave., Riverside, Calif.

OUR CHRISTMAS ISSUE

Truth to tell it surprised even a hardened old campaigner like the writer. It showed forethought and fore-management of a high order. It is not self praise to say this for I did not have a thing to do with it except to write the one article on the last page and that was because they needed something to fill in and that was waiting to be written.

The Flashlight Kennels, Foxhill Kennels, and the Randahof with their own inserts in beautiful colors made a striking feature.

Of other highlights in it, how about the little Garrity boy holding those enormous Great Danes, Felix and his Dad? Of the single dog pictures it is a tie as to which is the most interesting, Caroline Hall Richmond's Afghan, Fatima or Mervin Rosenbaum's Borzoi, Ortrava of Romanoff. Of the human reproductions, there is none to touch that one of Irving Ackerman on page 31, not even Dan's smile can override that picture of Irving. And that naturally brings us to the first remembrance of him. It was when he showed the Great Dane Beau Brummel and guess what the meeting was. He asked me with the blunt courtesy of a boy in his early teens to please step out of the way so the photographer could take a picture of Beau Brummel. Now whether we were admiring the handsome dog or the handsome boy, this deponent sayeth not. Then there were the early days of "Mme. Western Kennel World" to use the late Harry Lac"'s name for us, when Irving Ackerman, a then recent benedict, the married man, could have taken the male beauty prize anywhere in the world. And he'd rate well up now twenty years later.—H. Rosemont

Oakland Dog Show—March 5-6, 1938

SINCERE THANKS TO YOU

I want to take this means of thanking all of the "doggy" folks who sent the beautiful flowers and sincere sympathy in the loss of my pal, sweetheart and husband, Harry Eigenbrot. We were so happy together, and to lose him at Christmas time was a hard blow. Every gesture you made helped to lighten the burden in my heart.

If we all do meet again "on the other side", you will find us, away back in the mountains beside a trout stream, with Bruce playing with impromptu boats, and little Schnapps hunting in the woods and bushes—for what only little Dachsies know. You will hear Harry chuckle and say "Is yo' happy?" and we will all chorus a happy "Amen." My humble thanks to you all.—Sincerely, Helen (2) Eigenbrot.

AND THANKS AGAIN

And while on the subject of thanking the kindness of our friends in the face of trouble, your Editor, Mrs. Grace Wallace wishes to have you know she appreciates very much the kind notes you have sent wishing her speedy recovery from her illness. Her illness developed to be a serious malady which necessitated a serious emergency operation to save her life. We are happy to say that she is coming along very nicely and is now convalescing at home. We all appreciate your concern over her welfare and the kind messages of hope and comfort expressed by letter, telephone and telegraph.

NEW SHOW CIRCUIT

Preliminary announcement of a five-show far western circuit for mid-March, has been made by Fred Finney, secretary of the Tucson Kennel Club. The circuit idea among far-west show giving clubs has been growing for the past three years, and will burst into full flower this spring.

The circuit will start at Tucson, Saturday and Sunday, March 12-13, when the Tucson Kennel Club presents Dr. Henry Parrett as judge for its ninth annual all-breed show. The following Tuesday and Wednesday, March 15-16, El Paso, Texas, will hold a show. Two days for a breather and then the Albuquerque, N. M., annual fixture.

After Albuquerque, Pueblo, Colo., will come along, and Denver's annual Spring fixture will bring the circuit to an end. Dates, judges and other data on the complete circuit will be announced in early January.

According to Arthur William Jones, canine education rose to university estate during 1937 when the A. K. C. conferred upon four dogs of marked intelligence the highest degree within its power. These dogs are now entitled to carry after their name the letters "U. D." which signify Utility Dog. Also the lesser graduate degree, "C. D. X." (Companion Dog Excellent) was awarded to 20 dogs; while and undergraduate group of 286 dogs, 95 of them won their "C. D.'s".

The four college graduates are the German Shepherds, Ch. Schwarzpelz v Mardex, owned by Walter P. Pfeiffer of Crestwood Park, N. Y. and Ch. Jill of Garastanna, owned by Dr. Wm. R. Compton of Arlington, Va.; and the standard Poodles, Carillon Epreuve, owned by Mrs. Whitehouse Walker, Bedford Hills, N. Y. and Nunsoe Skagin of Carillon, owned by Henry J. Whitehouse, Mt. Kisco, N. Y.

In general, the Shepherds turned in the greatest number of degrees, but the average rating was not so high as that of the poodles.

THE GOLDEN GATE KENNEL CLUB AND THE CIVIC AUDITORIUM

Dates For San Francisco Dog Show Advanced to January 22 and 23

Despite the iron-bound signed contract that the Golden Gate Kennel Club had with the City of San Francisco for the use of the Civic Auditorium on the 29th and 30th of January for its annual dog show, that club was forced to give way to the President's Birthday Charity Ball proceeds of which go to the Infantile Paralysis Hospital in Georgia. This necessitated a last minute alteration of the dog show dates, and it was finally decided to hold the show on January 22nd and 23rd. The American Kennel Club was hastily consulted by telephone and the new dates were approved. Had the dates been postponed one week it would have conflicted with the New York show where Mr. Delmont judges.

The show will go ahead as scheduled with new dates. The premium list, with an extravagant list of trophies, is already in the mails. The date for the close of entries was also, of course, set ahead to January 15th, which is the final date to reserve entries because on this date a complete list of each breed entered in the show must be mailed to the American Kennel Club. The club is maintaining offices at the Ansel Robison store at 40 O'Farrell Street for the taking of entries.

An unfortunate circumstance arose with the change of dates. Three western clubs were scheduled to hold their respective shows on January 15 and 16, 1938. These were the Cocker Club of Southern California, the Doberman Pinscher Club of Southern California and the Pacific Coast Pekingese Club.

The American Kennel Gazette published the dates for these shows as January 15th and 16th and all kennel papers published the same dates.

After the changes of dates was made for Golden Gate, it transpired that the aforementioned specialty clubs had on short notice postponed their dates and that four or five other Specialty clubs in Southern California had joined with them to also hold a group of joint specialty shows on January 22 and 23. This produces a direct conflict of dates. When this was learned it was too late for either Golden Gate or the Associated Specialty Clubs to make further alteration of dates, and both shows go ahead as planned.

Fortunately there is little or no conflict in entries. The catalogues of the two shows demonstrate that last year only a handful of dogs went from San Francisco to the Associated Specialty shows, and very few of the dogs exhibited at the same specialty show came to the Golden Gate show.

ON THE COVER

On the cover for this issue is the Bernese Mountain dog, Fridy v. Haslenbach, born Mar. 9th, 1934, bred by Fritz Stalder, Haslenchbach, near Sumiswald, Switzerland and purchased on August 30th, by Glen Shadow of Ruston, Louisiana. Fridy, at the Swiss International Dog Show at Basle, 1935 won 1st prize, Excellent and C. A. C I. B., which is the highest champion certificate on the continent of Europe, called the International Beauty Championship Certificate. Mr. Shadow has prepared an article on this breed which appears on page 4 of this issue.

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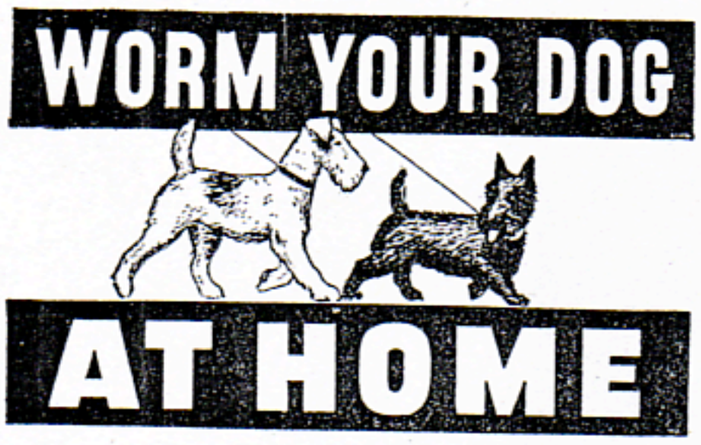
and Mrs. Wishart were favorably impressed with the breed in this country.

The Lakeland terrier now enjoys a new standard of points in England. Mrs. K. Barlow, who writes on this breed in the same English journal, has it that no attempt has been made to tie a judge down to exact details, but that a serious effort has been made to give a definite impression of the terrier which breeders should aim at producing. The Lakeland Terrier Club has drawn up a standard for a Lakeland which, though bearing a family resemblance that all terriers bear to one another, still has an individuality of his own and should not mistaken for any other breed. Regarding the color, the original idea was to mention each color by name, but too many colors are characteristic of the breed that it was considered simpler to state that each color was allowed, except white and dark mahogany tan. The liver color in a L. has a drawback; liver colors often have a brown nose and the nose should be black. The weight and size remain unaltered in the new standard. to the head what is wanted particularly is a well balanced head with the length of foreface in front of the eyes the same as the length behind the eyes to the occiput. In the description of the coat the words sufficient undercoat have been added, because some Lakelands possess a single coat. which is wrong, for obvious reasons.

In the Dog World, England, Alex Dalzell, J. P., puts forward sound advice upon a vital subject, which is: "Is Inbreeding the primary cause of the canine hysteria scourge?" Without entering into the pros and cons of the question of inbreeding, I personally, agree with Mr. Dalzell that inbreeding is the primary cause of canine hysteria. We have only to observe—as I had done during my many years (?) study—the results of matrimonial unions between very near relatives in human beings to see the baleful consequences arising therefrom: hysterical progeny, half-witted progeny, progeny easily subject to all sorts of diseases, etc. And why not compare humans with animals in this respect? I may be told that wild animals. four footed animals mate indiscriminately in their freedom; granted. But are we able to observe the pernicious results of such matings, those animals enjoy their complete freedom in the jungle or otherwise?—Horowitz.



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Bernese Mountain Dogs Take Rapidly to South

In June, 1935, while recovering from an attack of influenza, I read an article published in the American Kennel Gazette, written by Mrs. L. Egg-Leach of Winterthur, Switzerland, about the Bernese Mountain Dogs of the Swiss Alps. I read this article some two or three times as this was the dog that I so much admired from the pictures showing the dogs drawing the milk carts in my first grade reader when I was a child.

The childish desire to own some of these dogs was not completely abandoned, and while I was in France in 1918 and 1919, I had the opportunity of seeing some of these dogs which rekindled this childhood fancy. Because financial circumstance did not permit me to buy or import these dogs at that time it was necessary for me to abandon the idea as there were none to be had in the United States and no one had thought enough of this particular breed to import them.

After reading Mrs. Egg-Leach's article, I took the liberty to write her and ask for further information regarding them as well as some assistance in making a purchase. After some months of correspondence and untiring efforts on the part of Mrs. Egg-Leach, she succeeded in buying for me on August 30, 1936, Fridy v Haslenbach from Mr. Fritz Stalder, breeder. This was the best female dog of her breed in all Europe and it is useless to say that a very fancy price was required to purchase this bitch. Fridy was awarded first prize in the 1935 dog show at Basle; also Excellent and C. A. C. I. B., which is the highest champion certificate on the continent of Europe. called the International Beauty Championship Certificate, and all who have seen her since her arrival in the United States agree that it would be difficult to produce a more perfect or more beautiful dog.

On September 28, 1936, I forwarded draft to Mrs. Egg-Leach to purchase Quell v Tiergarten (Felix, kennel name) from Mr. G. Walti. He was not the best male dog in Switzerland, but he was the best to be had as the owner of the best male refused to sell him at any price.

On Sunday morning, November 1, 1936, Fridy and Felix left their homes in Switzerland to embark on the Normandie at Havre, France, which sailed on November 4, for New York. They arrived at New York on November 9th. This date added a new chapter to dogdom in the United States as they were the first and only pair of Bernese Mountain dogs of the Swiss Alps to ever land on American soil. On Saturday evening, November 14, 1936, these dogs arrived in excellent condition and were met by their new master, Glen L. Shadow of Ruston, Louisiana. With Mrs. Shadow's help we uncrated them in our back yard and fed them for the first time in Louisiana. After freeing them they seemed to be perfectly contented and after some weeks of personal attention, I transferred them to my country estate. These dogs have been in Louisiana one year on the 14th day of November 1937. Thev have withstood the heat exceptionally well and have adapted themselves to our customs and seem to understand our language readily.

I have never seen or heard of a pair of dogs that have caused so much interest among the public in general as these Bernese. On one occasion I took Felix to Monroe. Louisiana, to the Bendall-Vaughn-Wright Clinic to have an X-ray made of his chest and neck. Everyone in the clinic, doctors. nurses, visitors and patients who could possibly get close to this dog, asked numerous questions and admired him greatly. On another occasion Fridy and Felix were exhibited to the Hilcrest Grammar School of our city when they were studying about Switzerland, and the children and teachers were all delighted with them and wanted to touch their beautiful silky coats.

Anyone looking into these dogs' deep brown eyes, can see that they have a wonderful understanding and a kind, loving disposition. They are most affectionate toward children and are quite courageous in defending their rights. As a working dog I have never seen one that I think equals the Bernese Dog and if the homes that have suffered the loss of children from vicious kidnappers had had one of these dogs as a pet and pal for their child, no one would have been able to molest them without first killing the dog.

I am sorry that I do not have the vocabulary to describe these dogs as they are entitled to be and to picture them to the readers of this article as they really are. The picture on the front cover of this issue is Fridy v Haslenbach and anyone desiring further information may obtain same from the writer and it would be a pleasure to tell anyone about this wonderful breed. I buy them because I am a dog lover, and I may perhaps in the future have a few puppies to dispose of where I am assured they will have the best of homes and the best of care.

I also want to tell the readers of this article that it was only through my friends, Mrs. L. Egg-Leach, 35 Hochwachtstrasse, Winterthur, Switzerland, that I am today the owner of the best Bernese Mountain bitch in the world and through her untiring efforts that the U. S. A. can claim the best of the breed. She rendered months of service without any charge to me or the sellers and much credit is due her for this new breed we now have recognized in the American Stud Book.

On April 21, 1937, I had a letter from Mr. Perry B. Rice, Secretary of the American Kennel Club, stating that the Board of Directors held a meeting on Tuesday, April 13, 1937, and it was officially decided to recognize the Bernese Mountain Dog as a new breed in the Working Class. These are the first and only dogs of this breed to ever be registered with the American Kennel Club or the Secretary of Agriculture.

For the benefit of those who are interested the standard for the Bernese Mountain Dog is as follows:

A well-balanced dog, standing from 25 to 27 inches in shoulder, bitches up to 25 inches; with jet black, silky and slightly wavy coat of medium length; white markings on chest, feet, tip of tail and on foreface; rich russet brown markings distributed over muzzle, thighs, under body and tail; with a brown spot over each eye; which may never be missing; dark brown eyes, which seem to invite trust; ears V-shaped and set on high, hanging close to head; flat, broad, well developed skull; medium stop and short, broad muzzle; level mouth; long bushy tail or brush, carried low, slightly upward swirl permissible; compact, not too long body; muscular, straight fore-legs and well developed stifles; and an all around robust dog. This gives a fairly good picture of a really good specimen of the Bernese species of Swiss mountain dogs.—Glen L. Shadow, Ruston, Louisiana.

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BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG

Bernese Sennenhund ; Dürbächler

Here is the second largest of the Swiss Mountain Dogs or Sennenhund. Being long-coated, he is rather like the large Swiss draught dog, but is smaller in size. The breed is named after the Canton of Berne, and is by far the most popular of the Swiss breeds . . . one cannot help but observe how the St. Bernard is so very well known, whilst his cousin, the Bernese, who has been in Switzerland far longer, is comparatively a stranger outside his own country. He is often used as a haulage dog for the basket weavers of Berne. The Bernese was first imported through Scotland in 1936 ; since then, largely through the pioneering work of Mrs. Egg-Leach, the breed's " Ambassador," it was admitted in 1937 to the Stud Book of the American Kennel Club.

Height 23–27½ in. Weight about 55 lb. Colour jet black with white " self " markings. Coat long, undulating and silky.